

INCLUSION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN CONVERSION SMALL  
SCHOOLS

A Dissertation

by

BETHANY JOY PLETT

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2008

Major Subject: Curriculum and Instruction

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## ABSTRACT

Inclusion of English Language Learners in Conversion Small Schools. (August 2008)

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Small school reform is an increasingly popular reform in urban comprehensive high schools. Efforts to divide large high schools into small school groups have been funded by The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as well as by the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES). The Coalition of Essential Schools is a network of small schools that adhere to similar educational ideologies such as the desirability to provide inclusive educational environments. CES promotes inclusion as a means to equitable and democratic education. This study explains the tensions the philosophy and practice of inclusion has produced concerning English language learner (ELL) programs in conversion small schools. This study investigates (*a*) the ways in which ELL programs in conversion small schools have supported inclusive education, (*b*) the ways small school inclusion has affected ELL programs, and (*c*) the impact inclusion philosophy in conversion small schools on inclusive and equitable instruction for ELL students.

Through a multi-case qualitative study including interviews and observations, the contexts for the ELL programs in three different conversion schools are investigated and described. The data shows that none of the ELL programs investigated have been able to fully support instructional inclusion either due to a lack of belief in the efficacy of

inclusion or a lack of resources. Small school inclusion has affected ELL programs differently in each school. At one school, the ELL program felt almost no effects of the conversion. At another, the program is radically different than previous to the conversion. Third, inclusive and equitable instruction for ELL students in conversion small schools, even in the best case, is happening only in some classes. Due to a lack of resources, no ELL program has been able to implement inclusion as a programmatic reform. Finally, the impetus to involve ELL students in inclusion programs is highly influenced by special education policies rather than by legislation overseeing ELLs. The study concludes that inclusion is understood and practiced differently at each site. At the sites where any type of inclusion was practiced, teachers reported that inclusion provided ELL students with more social than academic benefits.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 mandated federal funding for Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language programs in public schools (Ovando and Collier, 1998). The Bilingual Education Act guaranteed nonnative speakers of English the right to receive English language education in order to have equal opportunity in accessing education (Berube, 2000; Reeves, 2004). Although the Bilingual Education Act provides for more equal education for English language learners, graduation rates remain lower than average among the English language learner (ELL) population (Derwing, DeCorby, Ichikawa, Jamieson, 1999; Walqui, 2000).

The Bilingual Education Act guarantees students the right to an equal education through English classes, but other conditions may conspire against English language learners to prevent graduation. First, gaining enough credits to graduate can be difficult. If students arrive in the United States during high school, they will not be allotted the five to seven years necessary to acquire English at an academic level (Collier, 1987). Since secondary programs are often structured so that students must learn English before beginning to earn content area credits, they fall behind and eventually drop out or age out. If students spend even one year taking mostly ELL classes to learn English, they will be one year behind their native speaking peers in completing the content area courses necessary for graduation.

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This dissertation follows the style of *TESOL Quarterly*.

Second, ELL students are sometimes tracked into low-level academic courses where they may be intellectually unchallenged and subsequently drop out (Callahan, 2005; Walqui, 2000). All of these conditions make graduation much less attainable for ELL students.

In order to address educational inequities suffered not only by ELL students, but also by other low income, urban students, a high school reform to convert large, comprehensive high schools into small schools has increased in popularity (Nathan, 2002). The philosophical principles supporting the small school movement challenge traditional secondary school practices such as tracking (VanderArk, 2002). The Coalition of Essential Schools (CES), an organization and network of schools promoting small school reform, publishes *Ten Common Principles* as part of an equity agenda in small schools. The tenth principle states,

The school should demonstrate non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It should model democratic practices that are directly affected by the school. The school should honor diversity and build on the strength of its communities, deliberately and explicitly challenging all forms of inequity. (The CES 10 Common Principles).

Because proponents of small school reform regard inclusion as a fundamental way for schools to increase equity, the reform raises significant questions concerning the inclusion of ELL students. Inclusion connotes a philosophy attached to ideas of equity that combat educational tracking and labeling of students. Inclusive classrooms seek to

provide high level, differentiated instruction to all students within the same setting (Cushman, 1992; 1998).

This investigation of ELL inclusion in the context of small schools adds to previous research on inclusion policy as state level ELL policies. Previous research done in states such as California and Florida that have mandated English-only programs or instated inclusion as a state policy of language learning (Callahan, 2005; Harper & Platt, 1998; Platt, Harper, Mendoza, 2003). Because ELL students are legally guaranteed specialized instruction in order to acquire English, small school reform that is focused on disrupting special programs in order to attain equity creates tension concerning appropriate education of ELL students. Unfortunately, no research exists to help explain the tension surrounding the inclusion of ELL students in conversion small schools.

#### *Statement of the Problem*

The program structures and philosophies in many conversion schools rely on aspects of instructional inclusion. For ELL students, inclusion often means a class schedule that includes at least some mainstream classes. In some conversion schools, the position and function of ELL programs remains relatively the same as it was before conversion. In other schools, the position and function of ELL programs becomes more inclusive and differs significantly from before the conversion. No research describing the programs or explaining the philosophical tensions that arise between ELL and inclusion exists.

Examining ELL literature in comparison with small schools literature raises questions about how conversion schools have handled the practical and philosophical

tensions that emerge between ELL students and small schools. Research investigating this environment helps describe the ways in which ELL students are being served in conversion schools as well as the possible philosophical tensions arising between the traditions of the two movements. This research is a valuable addition to both the body of small schools literature and the body of ELL inclusion literature.

### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to investigate the tension produced by the practical challenge of teaching ELL students in inclusion environments at conversion small schools. Qualitative research is appropriate for this investigation because I am working to illuminate a previously undefined and immeasurable issue (Merriam, 1998). I have a sense that tension exists because I have seen ELL inclusion be so difficult to implement on a practical level in conversion small schools. McMillan and Schumacher (1984) suggest that research questions may be “suggested by observations of certain relationships for which no satisfactory explanation exists, routine ways of doing things that are based on authority or tradition lacking research evidence, or innovations and technological changes that need long term confirmation” (p. 49). Although it is difficult to define, the relationship between conversion small schools and ELL inclusion is an innovation in high school programs. Because my research will both define and explore a supposed philosophical tension, qualitative research is appropriate.

My investigation will be a qualitative case study with both descriptive and heuristic aspects (Hickcock & Hughes, 1989; Merriam, 1998). My study will be a case in that it examines inclusion philosophy bound by the context of conversion small schools.

In one aspect the study will be descriptive because it will describe both the philosophy underlying the creation of ELL programs in conversion small schools, and the programs themselves. Peshkin (1993) describes descriptive research as foundational to research results. Since the problem of ELL inclusion in the context of conversion small schools is new, a descriptive phase to my research will help to begin construction on knowledge of this tension.

Another aspect of the case study is heuristic because the interpretation of the data will further elucidate understanding of the tension between inclusion philosophy and inclusion practice in ELL programs at conversion small schools (Merriam, 1998). Through interview and observation data gathered at three small school conversion sites, I have been able to pinpoint where philosophical tension arises in the conversion and practice of ELL programs in small conversion schools.

### *Research Questions*

The philosophical tension surrounding the inclusion of ELL students in mainstream classes centers on questions of equality for that population. According to the Bilingual Education Act, ELL students have the right to specific, separate English language instruction. According to inclusion philosophy, segregating students into special programs is an unequal educational process that detrimentally labels and tracks students (Cushman, 1998). Conversion small schools must find a philosophical and practical compromise between the mandate of the Bilingual Education Act and the practice of inclusion.

In order to investigate the philosophical tension between ELL programs and the conversion small school movement, I will research the following questions:

- 1) How have ELL programs in conversion small schools supported inclusive education?
- 2) In what ways has small school inclusion affected ELL programs?
- 3) What impact does inclusion philosophy have on inclusive and equitable instruction for ELL students in small schools?

### *Definitions*

*Coalition of Essential Schools (CES)* - The Coalition of Essential Schools is the main, national organization promoting school reform through small schools. CES has developed *10 Common Principles*, which serve as a philosophical and operational guide for small schools (See Appendix A).

*Conversion Schools* - Conversion schools are large high schools that have become a collection of small schools housed on one campus.

*English Language Learners (ELL)* - English language learner is the designation used by school officials for students who do not speak English as their first language in the schools participating in the study.

*English as a Second Language (ESL)* - English as a second language is the designation used for students who do not speak English as their first language. In this study, it is used if it is referenced in another study as ESL rather than ELL.

*Inclusion* - Inclusion as it is used in this research, is a movement stemming from Special Education literature where the trend is toward “including” special education students in



mainstream classrooms as much as possible. The Coalition of Essential Schools promotes inclusion, which ideally provides appropriate supports to enable students to succeed in mainstream classrooms. An example of inclusive practice is for an ELL teacher and a mainstream teacher to co-teach a content area class to help ensure the acquisition of academic English along with academic content.

*Mainstreaming* - Placing students in regular classrooms without supports necessary to ensure their success. An example of mainstreaming would be placing a beginning ELL student in 11<sup>th</sup> grade English with no other supports or help. Although the class might correspond to the student's age, the student would not have the ability to participate in the class in any way.

*Small Schools*-Small schools are schools that were previously large, but intentionally restructured to become small. Many small schools associate with small school organizations such as the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES). Administrators and teachers from several small schools around the nation see the need to determine the size of schools according to the staff's ability to "get around a table" and talk and adults' ability to know the names of students. Most small schools are 400 or fewer students (Cushman, 1997). Some small school advocates (Allen, 2002; Hampel, 2002) cite Conant's book *The American High School* (1959) as a key text recommending the consolidation of high schools into large schools; however, Conant recommended graduating classes of about 100 students. Therefore, Conant's "consolidated" high school would have had approximately 400 students, as recommended by small schools advocates. In a study of optimal high school size, Lee and Smith (1997) investigated

what size is most effective for student learning and in what size of school learning is most equitably distributed. Lee and Smith's study found that a high school of between 600 and 900 students is most effective in terms of equitable student learning.

### *Assumptions*

The following assumptions have been made while executing this study:

1. Participants will describe their knowledge of the conversion and the school according to their personal point of view.
2. Interviewing ELL teachers, mainstream teachers and administrators will lend a diversity of opinion and experience to the interview data.

### *Limitations*

This study has limitations in participant sampling and school contexts. The participants for the interviews were the people I had access to at the time of the research. I did not attempt to make contact with people who may have been involved in the reform but had left the school. Because of that, it is possible that I did not interview the entire population who were involved with a school's conversion to small schools.

Second, the issues of inclusion discussed in this research are happening within the particular context of school reform. Although inclusion is an issue in many schools, the small school context is an important variable to the results of this study. Researching inclusion in the context of small schools is important because small schools have chosen inclusion as a philosophical path toward equity. In other inclusion contexts, inclusion has been mandated by district or state officials. Investigating the ways inclusion affects a

school when the practice is intentional provides a broader picture of ELL programs' relationship to both small school reform and inclusion.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The bodies of literature related to this study focus on ELL students in mainstream and ELL classrooms, tracking of ELL students and the philosophical and legal issues of inclusion. The literature about ELL students in classrooms shows that, in general, ELL students have more effective academic and social interactions in ELL classrooms rather than mainstream classrooms (Clair, 1995; Harklau, 1994; Reeves, 2004). The fact that previous studies have indicated ELL students have more success in ELL classrooms shows that previous research has not found inclusion to be academically or socially effective for ELL students. However, none of the existing research was conducted in small schools restructured for intentional inclusion.

The tracking literature shows that, as a percentage of school population, ELL students are disproportionately tracked into low-level classes (Norrid-Lacy & Spencer, 2000). Furthermore, once they are placed in a low track, ELL students have difficulty acquiring both the language and content knowledge necessary to demonstrate their ability to enter a different track (Callahan, 2005). Low ability tracking of ELL students may contribute to the egregious dropout rates of the ELL population nationwide as students find it virtually impossible to earn the credits necessary for graduation.

Literature on the philosophies attached to inclusion movements focuses on determining what programs provide equitable education for ELL students. Some writers argue that separate, self-contained ELL classrooms are necessary while others argue that

mainstreaming, or inclusion, has more equitable results (Reeves, 2004). Legally, ELL students are guaranteed the opportunity to learn English through dedicated classes (Berube, 2000). Consequently, the purpose of the philosophies surrounding inclusion is not to decide *whether* ELL students receive English education, but *when* and *how*.

### *ELL Students in Mainstream Classrooms*

The frequency at which ELL students are found in mainstream classrooms has increased along with ELL populations because ELL students usually spend only part of their day in ELL programs. When not in ELL classes, students often go to mainstream classes (Clair, 1995). Population growth is only part of the reason for a growth in ELL inclusion. Politics and budgets also motivate the decision to mainstream ELL students (Harklau, 1994a; Platt & Harper, 1998; Platt, Harper, Mendoza, 2003). Including ELL students in mainstream classes within the small school context is complicated in regards to legal, practical and philosophical issues that arise between the ELL field and the small schools movement.

Research investigating the effects of mainstreaming for ELL students shows that ELL students do not fare well in mainstream classes. Harklau (1994) researched the ability of four ELL students to manage schoolwork and interactions in both ELL and mainstream classes. She found that ELL students very often sit silently throughout mainstream classes either because they resist interaction or because no interaction is required. Most mainstream teachers had very few personal contacts with ELL students and did not have time to notice when students did not understand mainstream material. Whereas ELL students quickly made diverse sets of friends in ELL classes, they found

very little in common with native English speakers. Consequently, ELL students often had unsuccessful social conversations that helped to distance them further from native English speakers.

Although ELL students in Harklau's study did not like being labeled ELL and often devalued ELL classes, Harklau's observations revealed that compared with mainstream classes, ELL students received much more appropriate education for their needs in ELL classes. One striking example comes from writing assessment. Harklau found that mainstream teachers, often burdened with hundreds of papers to grade, corrected grammatical or syntactical errors simply by marking them with a question mark or writing "grammar" in the margin. These kinds of prompts are not helpful to students who do not have native speaker intuition for a language.

From the results of her study, Harklau concludes that while ELL students valued mainstream classes more highly than ELL classes, the sort of attention and instruction available to them in mainstream classes was not sufficient to meet their language learning needs. On the other hand, total participation in ELL classes would not meet their content area needs. Harklau recommends that in the future, mainstream and ELL teachers continue looking for ways to work together to increase ELL student success.

Two other studies focus on the attitudes of mainstream teachers toward teaching ELL students. In interviews with three mainstream teachers, Clair (1995) found that in general, they did not perceive ELL students as needing any specialized instruction. For example, they believed that if districts provided appropriate materials such as bilingual books, they would have very few problems teaching ELL students. In addition, they did

not believe that they needed to change instruction for ELL students in the room. One teacher explained, “teaching is the same no matter what kinds of kids you have. It’s really true. It doesn’t matter what I’m teaching. If you’re a teacher, you’re a teacher. . . .” (p.191). Through these beliefs, these teachers were able to avoid taking responsibility for their own instruction in relation to the diverse population of their classes.

Like Clair (1995), Reeves (2004) found that mainstream teachers generally believed that equal treatment would result in equal education. Reeves interviewed three mainstream high school teachers in order to learn about their approaches to ELL students. Two of the teachers reported that they were very uncomfortable with allowing ELL students any special accommodation such as extra time or the use of bilingual dictionaries during coursework. The third teacher recognized the need for accommodations but was not sure when to make them or which were appropriate. For all three of these teachers, accommodations were understood as peripherals such as extra time, less work or extra help. None of these three teachers believed that they needed to modify their instructional style in order to increase success for ELL students.

Reeves’ (2004) interviews showed that even though all the teachers thought that ELL students should be treated like everyone else as much as possible, they were troubled by the inequity that equal treatment produced. Reeves explains, “all three teachers were aware that ELLs had restricted access to the curriculum in their English-medium classrooms, and each teacher struggled to decide if accommodations for ELLs were appropriate, and, if so, which accommodations would be effective” (p.58).

The preceding research shows that ELL students often have academic and social difficulties when they enter mainstream classrooms. In addition, once they are in mainstream classrooms, teachers are unsure how to manage instruction and assessment for ELL students. These studies imply that mainstream classrooms may not be the best places for ELL students. However, none of the classrooms featured in the study were intentionally small or personal. Therefore, it is important to study small school contexts where students are intentionally included in mainstream classes.

### *Tracking*

Tracking of ELL students is an issue that accompanies the issue of mainstreaming. Especially in high school, ELL students are often mainstreamed long before they have acquired academic English (Harper and Platt, 1998; Platt, Harper, Mendoza, 2003). But, they are often mainstreamed into low academic track programs. Callahan (2005) found that English language learners in California find themselves frequently placed in mainstream low track classes. In addition, she concluded that the time in American schools correlated negatively with entering high track academic programs. In other words, ELL students who had arrived recently to the United States had a better chance of entering high track academic programs than those who had attended U.S. schools longer. Students who had been in the U.S. for several years had a lower chance of entering the high academic track.

Ultimately, Callahan suggests that because schools wait until students are proficient in English to expose them to academic content classes, they are often irrevocably behind in content knowledge. While other students have been learning



content that prepares them for high school academic content, long-time English language learners have been in low-level content courses learning English. Callahan points to successful programs combining rigorous academic content with academic English instruction at International Schools in New York City, which are schools that serve only ELL students. Because being an ELL student in her study meant little access to high academic content classes, Callahan concludes that track placement, rather than English language proficiency, was the best indicator of students' academic success.

Another study discovered an informal ESL track operating at a school in the American southwest (Norrid-Lacy & Spencer, 2000). At that school, the ELL program did not prepare students well for exiting, but students also resisted leaving the program for academic content courses. In this study, Norrid-Lacy and Spencer found a language and identity divide between students who identified as Chicano and those who identified as Mejjicano. Chicano students were either born in the U.S. or arrived young enough to speak English well while Mejjicanos were recently arrived immigrants. Mejjicanos were made to feel ashamed that they did not speak English proficiently and resisted exiting the ELL track in order to enter the "regular" track, which was dominated by Chicanos.

Norrid-Lacy and Spencer conclude that competing social pressures among students contribute to creating informal tracking to an equal extent as formal structures for tracking. If students feel that they will compromise their identity by exiting ELL to participate in the regular academic track, the tracking does not have to be formal in order to be powerful.

Like Norrid-Lacy and Spencer, Olsen (1997) and Valenzuela (1999) both identify a type of social tracking that happens within ELL programs and constrains the ways in which ELL students exit ELL or do not exit ELL. In her study of immigrant youth in California, Olsen identifies a process by which ELL students at first identify simply as ELL students. Later, as they begin to understand the racial politics of the school and are racialized by the other students in the school, ELL students choose a “race” track in order to identify with a particular group. Olsen also observed students choosing “Chicano” or “Mexican” identities with “Chicano” being valued above “Mexican.”

Valenzuela (1999) identifies ELL programs as a subdivision a “regular” track at a high school in Houston. Since ELL students are differentiated by their need to learn English, they are not the same as native English speaking students in the “regular” track. Valenzuela defines this informal track as a “cultural” track within the regular track. Additionally, she describes a situation where ELL students have almost no possibility of entering honors courses because of their English proficiency.

A study by Harklau (1994) investigated the track placement of four Chinese students in an American high school. While all four of them were originally placed, according to their demonstrated academic ability, in low-tracked classes, two of the students were able to change their track placement. The two students who changed their track placement discovered that two of the students realized how the ability tracking system operated and used that knowledge to renegotiate their place within it. Harklau argues that it is critically important for teachers to teach the inequities of the tracking

system to ELL students so that they might have some power in overcoming low track placement due to English proficiency.

The Coalition of Essential Schools surpasses Harklau's recommendation that the tracking system be exposed to ELL students so that they might navigate it. Instead, CES proposes that schools be reformed so that tracking systems do not exist. The Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) has supported small school reform with an agenda based on interrupting the educational inequities caused by systemic structures such as tracking. As an antidote to tracking in urban comprehensive high schools, CES proposes the practice of inclusive education. As a guide for small schools, the tenth common principle of CES schools states,

The school should demonstrate non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It should model democratic practices that are directly affected by the school. The school should honor diversity and build on the strength of its communities, deliberately and explicitly challenge all forms of inequity (The CES Common Principles).

Rather than operating with tracked programs such as advanced placement or special education, the Coalition of Essential Schools prescribes classrooms that are heterogeneously mixed by ability level, age, and race. According to CES's theory, heterogeneous classrooms should move schools toward democracy because they provide the conditions for students to learn to work with one another. In working together, students will be able to investigate traditional inequities and silences simply by having contact with them.

Although no CES literature directly calls for abolishing ELL programs, many CES small schools struggle with maintaining separate programs for special populations. The issues raised in both ELL literature and in the literature from CES cause educators to seriously consider the effects of special programs on students' learning and self-esteem. The equity agenda has caused many CES schools to limit or abolish special programs in favor of offering differentiated instruction in inclusion contexts (Cushman, 1992).

In CES small schools, understanding special programs as a barrier to equity and democracy has motivated teachers and administrators to create schools that educate every student to the highest level. Many CES small schools no longer provide separate classes for special education or advanced placement. Following the inclusion principle as it is applied to special education and advanced placement would mean that ELL students ought to be placed in regular classrooms with all other students. In the regular classroom, the teacher would offer differentiated instruction and know students well enough to meet their instructional needs (Cushman, 1992).

The literature on tracking is important to this study because it shows how pervasive and difficult to overcome tracking systems are for ELL students. The tracking literature examines both internally and externally created tracking systems and the ways in which students navigate them. In the articles that advocate for students it is advised that ELL teachers teach students how to navigate the tracking systems. The tracking literature and the way tracking is positioned as a fact of high school life, highlights the radical nature of CES's suggestion that tracking must be abolished in order to achieve equity for students. My research investigates schools that have attempted to disrupt the

tracking system through CES's philosophy of inclusion.

### *Legal Issues and Inclusion*

On the other hand, the Bilingual Education Act guarantees specialized English language education for ELL students. Considering the fact that it can take up to seven years to learn a language and that many ELL students are attending school for the first time as teenagers, placing them in regular education classes is usually an untenable proposition (Collier, 1987). Thus, in environments like small schools, where special programs are seen as detrimental to equity, ELL programs face a great deal of tension. The tension for ELL programs in small schools concerns both the role of ELL programs and the placement of ELL students.

Philosophies surrounding inclusion issues are frequently tied to individual understandings of educational equality (Reeves, 2004). Reeves (2004) defines the two sides of the debate in terms of educational "differentiation" and educational "universalism" (pp. 45-46). Supporters of differentiation advocate for special programs for populations such as ELL. In differentiation, educational equality is dependent upon approaching learners as individuals in order to provide appropriate education. At their most extreme, universalists promote one program for all students. In universalist understanding, equality is achieved through offering the same treatment to all students (Reeves, 2004).

Most ELL professionals, by virtue of having become qualified to teach ELL, probably align themselves more with the philosophy of differentiation than universalism. At the same time, however, ELL and mainstream teachers recognize that students who

are separated from mainstream populations may be missing important educational content such as mathematics, science and literature (Harklau, 1994). Thus, in an attempt to address the issue of missed content, even teachers who believe in differentiated programs for ELL students may support ELL inclusion for at least some of the day (Clair, 1995; Harklau, 1994).

In general, universalists align themselves with conservative educational values of curricular and assessment standards (Reeves, 2004). In this point of view, students should not receive special educational programs because separating students into groups does not promote equality (Harper, 1998; Platt, 2003; Reeves, 2004). Platt, Harper and Mendoza (2003) point out that in this context, “inclusion has become part of a conservative philosophy regarding equity” (p.108).

Perhaps the strongest universalist argument in support of the idea that ELL inclusion in the mainstream promotes equality are what Harklau (1994) calls “folk beliefs” about language learning” (p.242). The folk belief “that children will learn English faster if they are in regular classes with native speakers of English” is a major contributor to educational policy concerning ELL students (p.242). Qualitative studies of ELL students and mainstream teachers show that inclusion of ELL students is a complex issue for all parties.

The issue of inclusion in conversion small schools reflects a larger issue concerning whether equal treatment of all populations provides appropriate, fair educational opportunities. In the small school movement, the move toward inclusion, or universalism, is seen as a step toward the elimination of tracking by offering all students

the same high-level programs. In the ELL field, moves toward universalism are understood to deny the differences in students.

### *Conclusion*

The review of literature constructs a generally negative view of ELL students' experience and opportunity in high schools. Mainstream classes, which are essential to graduation, are not shown to be sites of effective instruction or learning for ELL students. ELL students are tracked into low-level classes based on their ability to express themselves in English, which disregards their academic ability. Finally, because statistics about ELLS are alarmingly negative, educators struggle with the philosophies that guide policy.

As a remedy to low achievement, the Coalition of Essential Schools promotes instructional inclusion for all students. Small school reform is meant to interrupt tracking by having one, high quality program for all students. The gap, which is the focus of this research, comes from the fact that in previous research literature, ELL students have not fared well in mainstream classrooms. Although small schools might disrupt the practice of tracking ELL students, placing them in regular, mainstream environments may not be effective either.

### CHAPTER III

#### METHODOLOGY

This study investigates the tension between the philosophical ideals and the practice of inclusion in conversion small schools. Since phenomena, such as a perceived tension, lack definable outcomes, a qualitative multi-case research design is used for this study (Yin, 2003). The cases of the study are three schools that have undergone small school reform. Including three cases provides the opportunity focus on individual contexts as well as to generalize across contexts.

#### *Participants of Study*

The participants of the study were teachers and administrators who were involved in the reform process at their school. I conducted informal, preliminary interviews with ELL teachers at each of ten conversion high schools. Of this group of ten, teachers or administrators in three of the schools were highly involved in the small school conversion. Faculty members at these three schools were able to explain both the history and preliminary effects of the conversion on the ELL program. Faculty members from these three schools became the participants in my research. The following table shows a summary of the faculty members who participated in the study.



**TABLE 1**  
**Participant Summary**

<b>Participant Name</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Conversion Work</b>	<b>Number of Years at the School</b>
Amy Scarcella	Jefferson High School	ELL Teacher	Hired the year before conversion	6
Ken Bomer	Jefferson High School	ELL Teacher	Hired the year before conversion	6
Ella Green	Jefferson High School	Literacy Teacher	Hired the year I conducted research	1
Margaret Hawkins	Cedar View	District Administrator	Was not in the district at the time of conversion	3
Charles Gray	Cedar View	Principal of all small schools on campus	Worked in the building as a teacher during the conversion then became a vice principal. At the time of research, he was the central principal	6
Sean Kennedy	Cedar View	ELL Teacher	Worked in the building during the conversion	33
Rob Clausen	Cedar View	Small School Administrator	Hired after conversion	4
Celia Carr	Cedar View	Small School Administrator	Hired after conversion	6
Indira Henig	Cedar View	Small School Administrator	Hired after conversion	First year teacher
Naomi Delamarter	McKinley	School principal during conversion.  District administrator at the time of research	Assistant Principal before conversion. Principal for two years before conversion. Remained principal for one year after conversion.	7-In District

**Table 1 Continued**

<b>Participant Name</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Conversion Work</b>	<b>Number of Years at the School</b>
Sylvia Johnson	McKinley	Small School principal	Assistant Principal before the conversion. Became principal of a small school after the conversion	6
Lydia Stewart	McKinley	Small School principal	Hired as a small school principal during the conversion	2
Rafael Sandoval	McKinley	ELL Teacher	Taught at the school for two years before the conversion	4
Vanessa Rowley	McKinley	ELL Teacher	Taught at the school for one and a half years before the conversion	3
Annabel Chung	McKinley	Literacy Teacher	Taught at the school for three years before the conversion	6
Mark Skoda	McKinley	Literacy Teacher	Taught at the school for two years before the conversion	4

Although the teachers' knowledge of the reform process was my paramount consideration in choosing a sample, a secondary characteristic of ELL population size emerged which will contribute to my analysis of the research. The largest ELL population involved in this study is Jefferson High School in the Tukwila School District with an ELL population at 28%. The second largest ELL population is at McKinley High School with 17%. The smallest population is at Cedar View where 6.5% of the total school population qualifies for ELL services. Different ELL population percentages provided multiple views of inclusion philosophy and practice in the small schools. The

ELL population percentage affects both the number of ELL staff and the amount of inclusion ELL students have due to staffing.

### *Design of Research*

This study was designed according to a multi-case, qualitative research model. The design of the study helps highlight the specific school contexts as well as make comparisons between the school contexts. Since the purpose of the study was to investigate tension, which is a phenomenon without discernable characteristics or outcomes, investigating through multiple cases provides important contextual information (Yin, 2003). In addition, the multi-case design of the study allows for description of each school as well as generalization across schools. Because this is the first study of ELL in small conversion small schools, description of individual school contexts is important for building understanding of inclusion. The cross-case analysis provides the ability to recognize philosophical tension as a phenomenon occurring in several places (Yin, 2003).

### *Data for Study*

The data for this study derived from two sources. First, interviews with teachers and administrators in conversion small schools gave a picture of philosophical rationales and practice of inclusion for ELL students in small schools. Second, observations of ELL students' daily schedules at the small schools provided a view of how inclusion was practiced in that school. In order to observe the daily schedules of ELL students, at each of my visits, an ELL teacher gave me the schedule of the student, which I followed all

day. Through the observations, I approximated the experience an ELL student would have during a day at the school.

### *Procedure*

Developing a case study required interviews with small school teachers and administrators to gather information on the philosophical intentions underlying the structure of small school ELL programs. Additionally, interviews with teachers and administrators helped describe the relationship between the intended philosophy and the real practice of inclusion. Through interviews, I gathered data on the choices schools made concerning inclusion and appropriate instruction for ELL students in three conversion small schools.

My research took place in three small conversion schools in the Northwest United States. In each of these schools, I conducted interviews with the people who were important in making decisions about the ELL program both during the time of the study. At each school, the cast of interviewees was different. At each school, I interviewed the ELL teachers who agreed to interview, principals who were involved with the ELL program and mainstream teachers, if they were important to the conversion of the school or the current ELL program.

The goal of the first phase of the research, interviewing, was to study how inclusion philosophy helped construct the ELL program and how inclusion was practiced at the school at the time I arrived. I interviewed the teachers once in a formal interview context in interviews that lasted approximately one hour. Seventeen participants agreed to participate in interviews (See Appendix B).

The second phase of research involved data gathered through observations at the schools of the teachers I interviewed. I observed inclusion throughout the school day by following an ELL student's schedule. Because my goal was to observe inclusion at the small school, I did not observe a particular student or teacher. Instead, I observed an English language learner's day. In some small schools, ELL students have many classes each day together. If this was the case, I asked the ELL teacher to provide me with a schedule to follow where I attended classes that followed the ELL students' schedules. If the ELL students were not scheduled in a group, I asked the ELL teacher to provide me with a schedule where I could observe as many ELL students as possible in each class. The purpose of observing a student's day was to examine the relationship between the practice of inclusion during an actual day and the philosophy of inclusion, which I had learned about in interviews with teachers at the school.

The observations of ELL students' days in small schools provided information that helped me create thick descriptions of the small school environment for ELL students. These descriptions were then compared and analyzed with data gathered in the interviews with teachers in the small schools. An examination of the interview data and the observation data provided a picture of inclusion for ELL students as well as exposed gaps between inclusion philosophy and practice.

I observed at each school three times in order to be able create a thick description as well as to get a solid idea of the workings of the school. I made observations throughout the year with periods of time between them. Spacing my observations throughout the year helped to create what Denzin (1978) calls triangulation of time and

space. In order to increase the validity of my observations and findings, it was important for time to elapse between observations. With time between each observation, I was more confident that the issues I observed were actually program issues rather than issues related to the current unit or material of the class (See Appendix C).

Especially because no research exists to describe the philosophical and practical relationships between ELL programs and small schools, member checks were necessary and helpful in interpreting data. I asked the teachers I interviewed to read and comment on my interpretation of interviews and observations and on the resulting descriptions and theories.

### *Validity and Reliability*

Several aspects of the study design help increase the validity of the findings. First, I investigated ELL programs in three schools with different sizes of ELL populations as well as different small school conversion histories. Investigating within three different schools helped me investigate the particular context of ELL programs in conversion small schools while also providing me with enough context to weigh my findings in one school against those in another school.

My choice of interview participants helped lend validity to the study because I interviewed administrators, ELL teachers and mainstream teachers. Nearly all participants were involved in the conversion process, but they worked from various points of view. Including all of these people in the interviews helped to reveal differences in ideologies related to the small schools conversion.

My observations of ELL program schedules took place over a period of time during one academic year. I put several weeks or months between my observations of ELL program schedules. Placing time between observations lent validity to the data because it helped ensure that my observations were based on programmatic issues rather than daily classroom issues (See Appendix D).

Using the combination of interview data and data gathered from observations of the ELL programs contributed to a triangulation of data sources. According to Mathison (1988) “the value of triangulation lies in providing evidence such that the researcher can construct explanations of the social phenomena from which they arise” (p. 15). Using two data sources will bolster the reliability of the findings since findings from the two methods of gathering data commented on each other as well as revealed gaps in the data from either source.

Finally, in order to support the reliability of my study, I asked for member checks from some of the teachers and administrators I interviewed. I asked four of the participants to read my research and comment on it. Two participants agreed to read and complete follow-up interviews with me. Both of the participants felt that the interpretations presented in the research matched well with the textual evidence and their own experiences. I did not make any significant changes to the presentation of the data after completing the member checks.

### *Analysis of Data*

In order to create a descriptive case study addressing my research questions, I coded transcription data with codes related to the research questions. The transcriptions

of seventeen interviews created a corpus of approximately 45,000 words. Since I gathered data from three schools, I analyzed the data two ways. First, I coded and chunked data from particular schools in order to make analyses specific to the school. After I coded and chunked for all three schools, I completed a trans-school analysis in order to make conclusions on a more general level.

Analyzing the data on these two levels is important to the findings of the study because of the complete lack of existing data on ELL programs in conversion small schools. The particularistic, school level data added to my understanding of the dynamics between inclusion philosophy and actual school practice in specific contexts. The more general analysis of all three schools' programs helped me understand the relationship of inclusion and conversion small schools on a more general, programmatic level. By analyzing the programs of all three schools, I was able to begin to draw conclusions about inclusion and small schools.

The three schools I studied for this research have all participated in the same conversion small school reform. All three schools have created very different programs from each other because of different contexts and concerns during and after the conversion. The following analysis first provides a description of the conversion process and practice in terms of ELL programs at each of the three conversion small schools. Second, I discuss the causes of philosophical tension for ELL programs in conversion small schools.



### *Context of Study*

The study took place at three conversion high schools in the western United States. All of the schools have become small schools within the past seven years. All of the schools were associated with the Coalition of Essential Schools during their reform. It is important that all three schools maintained the association with CES because we can assume that they had at the very least seen the Ten Common Principles, which call for educational equity through inclusion.

The schools had ELL programs prior to their conversion as well as after their conversion. The ELL population at each school is diverse. Although the populations are dominated by Spanish speakers, they hold the majority by only a small amount at each school. The other approximately 50% of ELL students are non-Spanish speakers and consist mainly of East Africans, Eastern Europeans, Koreans and Samoans.

### *Implications of Study*

My research focused on the gap between the philosophy and practice of inclusion in small schools for ELL students. In terms of inclusion philosophy, my research helped show why conversion schools hold ELL inclusion in high esteem even though research (Clair, 1995; Harklau, 1994) indicates that ELL students usually do not thrive in mainstream classrooms. My research also describes the program structures that have emerged for ELL students in small schools because of the desire to practice inclusion.

Observations of the school day will help show what inclusion of ELL students actually looks like in the small school. Having both interview and observation data contributed to the knowledge of small schools by showing what educators *think*

inclusion will do and how that plays out in the small school environment. So far, the only literature available supports inclusion of ELL students without examining the daily practice of inclusion at a small school. An analysis of the combination of interview data with observation data will help give a clearer view of how inclusion actually effects the school day for ELL students.

### *School and Participant Profiles*

Jefferson High School began their conversion from a large, comprehensive high school to a conversion small school in 2000. The conversion was motivated by the staff, which was concerned about the progress of their students toward passing state tests and graduating. Jefferson is a medium sized high school of about 800 students with an ELL population of approximately 30%. Fifty percent of students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

Jefferson High School sits in the middle of a residential neighborhood of low to medium income homes and rental properties. One of the edges of the neighborhood is a major highway that is the home to many Latino, East Indian and Somali businesses. An international airport, which provides a wide range of low-skilled jobs in hotels, taxi companies and car rental companies, is nearby. Jefferson is the singular high school in the district.

The school building appears relatively new and modern with colored brick and large windows. The school is built on a traditional pattern with three main locker lined hallways radiating from a central hub, which acts as the cafeteria and meeting area. A relatively new county library is directly across the street from the school and many

students go there after school. Because the school is situated in a residential area, many students and parents walk to and from the school.

In 2005, the demographic data of Jefferson High School provided by the state's superintendent's office reported a total population of about 800 students. Of those 800, 2% were American Indian, 18.6% were Asian, 29 % were American Black or African American, 14.6% were Hispanic and 35.2 % were white. Fifty percent of students qualified for free and reduced lunch and about 30% of the total population of the school qualified for ESL services. The total population of the school between 1998 and 2005 did not change significantly even though the diversity of the population has changed significantly.

The participants I interviewed at Jefferson were Amy Scarcella, Ken Bomer and Ella Green. All three were teachers, but only Ms. Scarcella and Mr. Bomer were ELL teachers. Ms. Green was a literacy teacher who worked with ELL students on emergent literacy one period a day. Ms. Scarcella had worked at Jefferson for six years at the time of research, and Jefferson was her first teaching job after completing a career change. Ms. Scarcella's first year at Jefferson was the year the faculty had received a grant for school reform and had begun to plan the conversion to small schools. Mr. Bomer was hired at Jefferson the same year as Ms. Scarcella, but he came with experience. Jefferson was not his first teaching job.

Ms. Scarcella and Mr. Bomer were present from the beginning of the reform and offered valuable history regarding the process and philosophy the school followed during the reform. However, since it was their first year at Jefferson, they were not

responsible for planning the ELL program during the reform. A third ELL teacher researched and planned the reform. Unfortunately, she did not have time to participate in this study.

The last participant at Jefferson was Ella Green. She was a new teacher at Jefferson the year I completed my research there. She had taught previously on the East coast. Ms. Green specialized in literacy, and did not have specific ELL certification. She taught literacy to newcomer ELL students with emergent and beginning literacy. As a participant, her point of view acted as a counterpoint to Ms. Scarcella's and Mr. Bomer's because she was new to the school six years after the conversion and because she lent an outside view of the ELL program.

### **Cedar View High School**

Cedar View High School is in a working class suburb of a mid-sized, former industrial city. The school building was built in the 1980's and has a traditional design with two stories of locker lined hallways. Cedar View has a similar story to Jefferson and McKinley. It has experienced significant population shifts over the past decade. The school is set between a high-income residential area and a commercial area made up of strip malls, grocery stores and gas stations. Within blocks of the school are businesses that target Latinos and Koreans. Also, different than both McKinley and Jefferson, the Black population at Cedar View is comprised mainly of American blacks rather than recent African immigrants. The population changes at Cedar View have not been as dramatic as at the other two schools, but in particular, the staff is noticing the rise in the population of students from Mexico. The population of students qualifying for ELL

services at Cedar View is less than half the size of the population qualifying at Jefferson and McKinley. Cedar View is one of three high schools in its district, but it is the only school that offers an ELL program. Students qualifying for ELL services throughout the district are bused to Cedar View.

At Cedar View, many people were involved with the conversion and subsequent planning of the ELL program. Consequently, I interviewed district administrators, school administrators and teachers. The district administrator, Margaret Hawkins, had been in the district for three years at the time of research. She was the direction of special programs and had an extensive background in Special Education.

Cedar View maintained a central principal after the conversion. Additionally, each small school had an administrator who, traditionally, would have been at the level of an assistant principal. The central principal, Charles Gray, had worked at the school as an assistant principal during the conversion. He shared a rich view of the conversion's challenges and successes. Rob Clausen and Celia Carr were the small school leaders who I interviewed because their small schools had dealt most intensively with ELL issues.

Sean Kennedy was a thirty-three year veteran ELL teacher who had spent his entire career at Cedar View or in the district. Although he had retired the year before my research began, he still volunteered many hours a week helping the ELL department with scheduling and other administrative duties. Since he was still at the school frequently, he agreed provide an interview. Lastly, Indira Henig, a first year teacher who was hired to replace Mr. Kennedy, participated in this research. She provided the point

of view of a teacher coming into the school at a time of upheaval in the relationship between the ELL program and the small schools.

### **McKinley High School**

McKinley High School shares some of the characteristics of Jefferson High School. Like Jefferson, it is also near a major airport which helps provide low skilled jobs for the families the school serves. McKinley also used to be a majority white school that has had a significant amount of population change in the past twenty years.

Unlike Jefferson, McKinley is not as much of a neighborhood school. It is located between two major highways and serves a very long, narrow area. Most McKinley students do not live close enough to the school to walk to school. If they walked, they would have to walk on busy, commercial streets rather than through residential neighborhoods. Also different from Jefferson, McKinley has a relatively old physical plant. The school was built as a collection of separate, octagonal buildings. As the school's population grew, other buildings were added. Presently the school has four unattached octagonal buildings, which require students to walk outside between classes. In addition to the octagonal buildings is a long L-shaped building that is a more traditional two-storied, locker-lined high school building. The third, building of the campus sits up a hill and across a parking lot. The age, maintenance and campus plan for the physical plant suggest that McKinley is a poor school in a poor area.

McKinley High School is one of four high schools in its district. While it had enjoyed a relatively good educational reputation throughout the 1980's, by the end of the

1990's it had become the high school to avoid. Orderly discipline and test scores were deteriorating.

Participants at McKinley included principals, mainstream teachers and ELL teachers. The year of research was only two years after the conversion was completed, so many teachers who worked on the conversion were still working at the school.

Naomi Delamarter, who was the central principal during the conversion, was working as a district administrator at the time of research. Ms. Delamarter was instrumental in gaining faculty support for the conversion at McKinley. She was able to provide a view of the history that led to the school's decision to convert. Lydia Stewart and Sylvia Green were small school administrators. Ms. Stewart was hired to open one of the small schools while Ms. Green had been an assistant principal before conversion and was hired as principal of one of the small schools for the conversion.

Vanessa Rowley and Rafael Sandoval were both ELL teachers working at the school before conversion. Both helped plan the ELL program for the conversion and worked in separate small schools after the conversion. Both worked with their schools to try to create innovative, inclusive classrooms.

Annabel Chung and Mark Skoda were mainstream teachers. Annabel Chung worked at the school before the conversion and was instrumental in researching conversion process and writing grants to help with the conversion. Mr. Skoda also worked at the school before the conversion and had an interesting point of view as a mainstream literacy teacher who was very interested in practicing inclusion his own classroom.

Below, Table 2 shows the demographic and racial changes at the three schools between 1998 and 2005. These are the years for which state data was available. Although the data only represents eight years, it shows dramatic changes at each school. Particularly Jefferson and McKinley have experienced significant changes in their populations.

**TABLE 2**  
**Demographic Data for Jefferson, Cedar View and McKinley High Schools 1998 and 2005**

<b>Populations</b>	<b>Jefferson High School 1998</b>	<b>Jefferson High School 2005</b>	<b>Cedar View High School 1998</b>	<b>Cedar View High School 2005</b>	<b>McKinley High School 1998</b>	<b>McKinley High School 2005</b>
Total Population	700	800	1400	1500	1,100	1,150
White	55%	35%	45%	43%	55%	35%
Hispanic	9%	15%	8%	15%	8%	23%
Asian	15%	19%	20%	13%	21%	24%
American Indian	3%	2%	3%	1.5%	3%	1%
Black/ African	18%	30%	24%	26%	12%	17%
Free/ Reduced Lunch Students	40%	50%	40%	46%	29%	52%
Qualified for ESL Services	N/A	28%	N/A	6.5%	N/A	17%

Although the table does not disaggregate the ethnicities, observing the ELL programs at each school reveals details about the populations at each school. While the table shows that Jefferson gained a significant population of Blacks and Africans,



Jefferson actually gained in their population of immigrants from East Africa. Walking the halls at Jefferson shows that many students are of East African descent. McKinley's largest population gain was in students from Latin America. The majority of those students are Mexican. Cedar View also has gained in their number of students from Latin America as well as a small rise in Black/Africans. However, at Cedar View, the rise in the Black/African population is in African American students who do not qualify for ELL services. At Cedar View, there are almost no African immigrant students. In addition, their Asian population has changed from Southeast Asian in the 1980's to mainly Korean today. Almost all of the ELL students speak Spanish or Korean as a first language. Along with changes in the racial composition of the population, it is important to note that all three schools have seen a sizeable increase in the number of students qualifying for reduced and free lunch.

The following four chapters explain the data gathered at each school. Chapters IV, V and VI give detailed descriptions of the data gathered through interviews and observations of each school. Within the chapter, the data is organized around the particular issues that contribute to philosophical and practical tension related to the ELL program at the school.

In chapter IV, the issues contributing especially to practical tension at Jefferson High School are community and the practice of mainstreaming rather than inclusion. The chapter describes the effects of Jefferson High School's ELL program, which did not undergo dramatic instructional or structural change after the small school conversion.

Chapter V is set at Cedar View High school. Like Jefferson, one of the main issues at Cedar View High School is community. In addition to community, the relationship of equity to the practice of inclusion is a central theme of the data.

Chapter VI focuses on McKinley High School. Like Jefferson and Cedar View, McKinley's issues are community and the relationship of equity and social justice to inclusion. McKinley is the only school in the study that also deals with the relationship of instruction as an issue that affects the philosophy and practice of inclusion.

Chapter VII compares and contrasts all of the high schools in a cross-case analysis. In this chapter, the relationship between the inclusion of ELL students and the inclusion of students who qualify for special education is examined. Interview data shows that the philosophy and practice of inclusion in special education programs is a major influence on planning for inclusion of ELL populations.

## CHAPTER IV

### JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL

The previous chapter compared the historical and current demographics of each research site. This chapter will detail the conversion at Jefferson High School through the lens of the three research questions. First, the chapter gives a description of the conversion process at the school along with the considerations made in designing the new ELL program. Then, the research questions are applied to interview data gathered from teachers at Jefferson. Finally, the relationship of the ELL program to the mainstream program is described based on observational data. In general, the interview data shows that the small school conversion did not cause a great deal of change for the ELL program at Jefferson. The observational data shows dissonance between ELL teachers' perspectives and actual instructional practice at the school.

At Jefferson High School, two main issues have contributed to the tension of operating the ELL program in the conversion small school. First, a tension exists between the ELL teachers' beliefs and the philosophical position of the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) around the issue of inclusion. At Jefferson, the ELL teachers believe mainstreaming is inclusion and are satisfied with the program they offer. Although teachers do not sense a tension in regards to mainstreaming and inclusion, in terms of the definitions used in this study, a tension exists.

Second, at Jefferson more than at the other two schools, ELL students struggle with belonging to multiple school communities. The ELL program creates a strong sense

of community, which ELL students have to leave as they progress through the program. The loss of the community is a factor in causing some students to drop out of school. While small schools are intended to create a sense of community, the relationship of the ELL program to the rest of the schools has actually made it more difficult for ELL students to find community.

Jefferson 's small school conversion took place quickly and brought swift change. Jefferson 's small school conversion took place over the years 2000 and 2001. In 2000, the school had a grant for school reform from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and teachers were beginning to brainstorm ideas for small schools. Ken Bomer, an ELL teacher explains,

When I walked into it, the school had received the grant, but no academies were started. Basically, they had received the grant and they were starting to talk about what a small learning community might look like and what small schools might be like at Jefferson. But at that time, nothing had been done in terms of splitting into academies. Within a few months there was an invitation to staff to provide proposals about what they thought a small school should look like (Mr. Bomer, October 3, 2006).

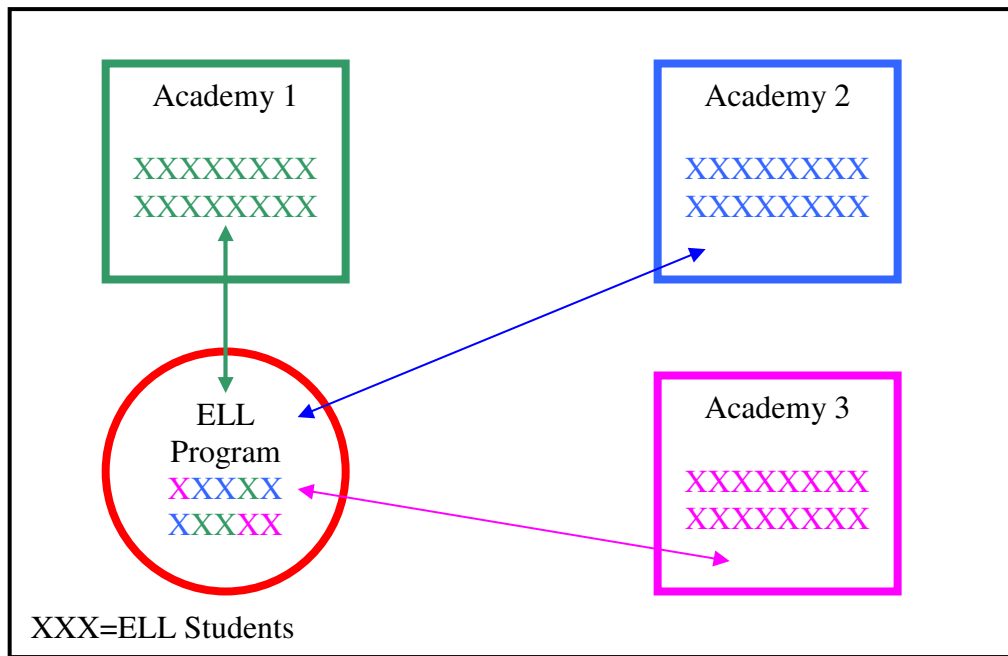
By the end of the year, the staff had decided to create three academies, pared down from an original five. Although ELL had been envisioned as having their own academy, by the end of the year, the ELL teachers decided not to be a separate academy. Mr. Bomer explains the decision,

Originally we thought that newcomers would be in their own academy and they would go out one period a day for a mainstream P.E. class or something.

Originally we thought that just newcomers would be in an ELL academy. As students gained more language, they would be put into a mainstream academy. A lot of what we decided had to do with workload. We felt that the amount of planning and work and everything that had to be done couldn't be done by two and a half staff. So, we decided to disband the idea of an ELL academy but we still follow the same exact program that we started out with. The thing that has changed is that kids are in an academy when they first come to the school. And as much as possible, the elective classes for newcomers are in their mainstream academy. So they have academy involvement from the beginning (Mr. Bomer, October 3, 2006).

Teachers at Jefferson finally settled on a design that I will call a "hub" ELL program. The hub ELL program sits outside of the small school academies and attempts to work with and serve all of the academies. The ELL program after conversion was not significantly different than the ELL program before conversion. Figure 1 shows the structure of the relationship between the ELL program and the mainstream program in the small schools at Jefferson.

**FIGURE 1**  
**Configuration Jefferson High School's ELL Program**



From the beginning, teachers at Jefferson advocated for ELL students to participate in the mainstream program. In order to provide students with the opportunity to participate in mainstream classes, teachers created a program where beginners take one period of a mainstream elective class while the rest of their schedule is contained in ELL writing, reading, math, computer class and social studies. As students progress through the levels of ELL, they may take two mainstream elective classes until, finally, they come to a transitional level before exiting ELL entirely.

*How Has the ELL Program Supported Inclusive Education at Jefferson?*

The ELL program at Jefferson has practiced mainstreaming but has not attempted to practice inclusion. In terms of the CES definition of inclusion, the ELL program at Jefferson has not supported inclusive education for ELL students. The English language learner program at Jefferson can be characterized as a program focused on separation rather than a program focused on inclusion for ELL students. Because Jefferson operates a hub program now, the ELL program's relationship to the rest of the school is similar to the way it was when the school was comprehensive. The ELL program seeks to prepare ELL students as fully as possible to be proficient English speakers *before* they enter mainstream classes.

Because of its focus on providing ELL courses until students are proficient enough to succeed alone in the mainstream, Jefferson's ELL program has not supported inclusive education as it relates to CES principles. Maintaining a separate, insular program has also created much programmatic tension around the practice of mainstreaming students. Mainstreaming at Jefferson is a practice that is not integral to the philosophy of instruction. Teachers seem to hold a philosophy of separation while they have students participate in mainstreaming because it is necessary for scheduling.

Before the small school conversion, the program for English language learners at Jefferson had a sense of smallness and community recognized and valued by other members of the school. Amy Scarcella, an ELL teacher at Jefferson, described the situation, "We had our academy. And the principal said at the time, "everybody wants

what you guys have.” And it was something that everyone else was attaining to, so we weren’t going to lose it.”

Because the program was already small and maintained its own sense of community, administrators and teachers at the school did not present significant challenges to the program’s previous structure in the comprehensive school. Ms. Scarcella describes the ease with which the program structure was allowed to remain as a separate program,

I know we advocated a lot for our program and keeping the kids [in ELL classes]. I mean, we wanted to make sure we were able to hold on to them and decide when they could go out. And we were armed and ready. As it turned out, we didn’t have to be but, but we felt, you know, that was a big “if.” (Ms. Scarcella, June 22, 2006)

From the perspective of the teachers in the ELL program, structures did not change significantly when the school converted. Students would still be primarily involved in the ELL program even though they were assigned to an academy in which they had minimal participation.

The success of the ELL program as the community center for ELL students was also mentioned in an interview with a newer teacher named Ella Green. Ms. Green points to the community of the ELL program as one of its successes:

What I think is successful, initially, for these kids, is the way that they have this sheltered program here. I think it’s good for the kids socially that they’re around each other all the time. I think it’s



very good that they have a core group of teachers so that they identify with the same group of teachers (Ms. Green, June 21, 2007).

Ms. Green's observations provide a valuable outsider point of view of the ELL program because, having been hired five years after the conversion, she did not participate in the conversion.

Since the ELL program maintained a strong community after the conversion, teachers were concerned with finding ways for students to participate in mainstream classes. To that end, they decided that students would take elective courses within their academy from the beginning of their time at Jefferson. The ELL teachers understand elective mainstream classes as an opportunity for students to have contact with native English speaking peers. Mr. Bomer reports,

From the get go that's always been the idea here. That even a newcomer student with no English whatsoever would have one mainstream class so that they are around English speaking peers. They have access to English speaking, native staff. That's never even been a question (Mr. Bomer, October 3, 2006).

Mr. Bomer also describes ELL students' participation in extracurricular activities as a way that inclusion happens at Jefferson.

They [ELL students] are included from the beginning with an elective class. The positives about it are that sometimes they'll develop friendships with native English speaking peers. All the regular education staff gets to know our kids. They get to know them from minute one when they can't even say, "Hi, my name is so and so." It's really good and our staff loves them. And they love their teachers so I think that's the best part. I mean the kids are very active in other ways. Not just inclusion through school. We've got a lot of kids who play on the soccer team. We have a lot of kids who go on the dance team. We have a lot of kids who join the multicultural club. We have a lot of kids who are in the Muslim student association. I mean the kids aren't just mainstreaming in school. They're mainstreaming in groups, clubs sports--you name it. And it just furthers their English skills. You know, for example, last year a couple of kids in my class played soccer and between the beginning of season to the end of the season their English fluency just really picked up (Mr. Bomer, October 3, 2006).

Although the ELL teachers appreciate mainstreaming into the academies for the social benefits it lends ELL students, it has also been occasionally problematic when students have not been sufficiently proficient in English to understand the language of the class. Mr. Bomer described challenges beginning ELL students had faced in their mainstream classes the previous year.

I'll tell you when there are issues. It's when a kid is at a beginning level of English and they are mainstreamed into a class for which they just can't access the content at all. Not even a piece of it because of language. So kids get really frustrated. And teachers tend to get frustrated with that. So I would say, the thing that wouldn't work well about inclusion is if these kids are pushed out into the mainstream without adequate support and without the language skills to be able to be successful. We have had some examples of that. Last year, classes were packed, so for an elective, beginning students were taking Food and Nutrition and it was just too hard. It was really frustrating for the kids. They said, "I hate this class. I don't learn anything. I don't know anything." And the teacher, of course, was frustrated too, because it was a big class and here you see these kids and they don't understand anything, and there's not enough time to help them the way they need to be helped (Mr. Bomer, October 3, 2006).

Mr. Bomer's account of mainstreaming at Jefferson indicates that mainstreaming could be theoretically helpful for the social lives of ELL students but is also sometimes academically detrimental if the language of the class is unattainable or inappropriate to the students' language level.

The preceding interview data illuminates the tension that has developed around a highly sheltered ELL program that uses elective classes as inclusion. At Jefferson, relying on elective classes as the inclusion program is problematic on philosophical as

well as practical levels. Philosophically, sending students to mainstream classes does not fulfill the vision of inclusion set forth by CES. Practically, placing ELL students in elective classes is questionable as a language learning strategy because it does not to provide meaningful language input.

At Jefferson, placing ELL students in mainstream elective classes creates a paradox in terms of equity. Although mainstreaming fulfills the idea that students should participate in regular programs, the actual practice of mainstreaming results in *less* equitable education for ELL students when they are in classes where they cannot access the content because they do not understand the language. Ultimately, the ELL program does not support actual inclusive education.

*In What Ways Has Small School Inclusion Affected the ELL Program at Jefferson?*

The development of small school academies has emphasized a tension in terms of community for ELL students at Jefferson. Since the school's conversion to small academies, ELL students at Jefferson have struggled to know whether they should identify with the ELL program or the academy to which they belong. This tension is highlighted by the implementation of small schools because small schools create a separate, deliberate school community outside of ELL for students to belong to. Theoretically the availability of the small school community would increase students' opportunities to connect with school. However, at Jefferson, it seems to increase the sense of alienation for ELL students when they need to leave ELL and realign themselves with the small school academy.

From the observations I made at Jefferson, as well as from Ms. Scarcella's description of the ELL program, the community built within the lower levels of language learning is very strong. In observations, I noticed that within lower level ELL classes, students knew each other well and talked to each other a lot. ELL students at Jefferson spend a lot of time together because they often have three out of four classes together. Evidence of their community shows in the fact that students from different backgrounds and language groups speak English to each other even when they do not know much English. The community in the ELL program is created through fieldtrips, special events and consistent contact with families.

Ken and I take them [on fieldtrips] for the day. We take them up to the mountains, we go to the city, we go to the lake. He incorporates that in their social studies projects. We go to colleges. I do careers in computers, so it all kind of works out well. But, the community is what makes it. It's absolutely what makes it and what saves them later on. They come back here over and over and they keep coming back here. And we know them. We know their families and when something's going on we talk to each other and it's what all the academics are striving for. And we've been doing it (Ms. Scarcella, June 22, 2006).

The sense of community in the ELL program is a key advantage produced by small school conversion. Small community units, such as advisories or small programs in schools help give students a sense of belonging that may increase academic engagement and achievement (Conchas, 2006; Cushman, 1990; Walqui, 2000). At

Jefferson, the ELL program functions as a small unit that supports students. Within the ELL program, students have experienced a similar level of support both before and after conversion.

While support within the ELL program has remained the same, the conversion has brought a new tension to ELL students in the form of community loss. Ms. Scarcella has noticed community loss when students reach advanced levels of English and receive a schedule of almost all mainstream classes.

We were worried about our kids' identity as ELL versus academy. And I still am worried about integration into academies because they're [students are] not. Now we've got four levels of English in our ELL program. Before we only had three and that equals at least two years, if not longer. Then they go out to transitional English with a regular education teacher teaching them but it's recognized as an ELL class. Usually, students do really well in transitional classes and then they go out to regular English. But once they get out of our self-contained program a lot of them just drop like flies. They can't handle it because they've lost the connection. We especially see this problem with Spanish speakers and maybe it's reality. Maybe they would have dropped out anyway because, you know, they've got to survive and families have to survive and they can work. So, it's hard to know, but that's our big challenge now--How do we retain these kids? (Ms.Scarcella, June 22, 2006).

Although Ms. Scarcella admits that reasons for dropping out of high school can be various and complex, she also specifically mentions the loss of connection as a major reason students leave school. The loss of community as a major reason for dropping out is logical in light of the fact that students stay in school as long as they have the ELL community, sometimes two or more years, but drop out when they lose that community.

In both comprehensive and small schools ELL programs are meant to give support to students while they become proficient in English. In the usual trajectory of an ELL program, students progress in proficiency until they exit the program in order to participate in mainstream English classes. In the comprehensive school, ELL students exited into a large school where they joined “regular” students who did not identify with a particular program. In the small schools, there is an underlying expectation that ELL students will identify primarily with their small school academy, because that is where they will ultimately end up.

In observations of four transitional or mainstream classes at Jefferson, ELL students did not interact openly with mainstream students. In all four classes the ELL students sat together in a group or apart from mainstream students. The mainstream students did not show open aggression toward the ELL students and the ELL students were not obviously afraid. It was more like they simply had not had the occasion to meet each other. In addition, the ELL students did not seem to be particularly well known by their mainstream teachers. All of this is a bit contrary to Ms. Scarcella’s and Mr. Bomer’s perception that ELL students are known by mainstream teachers and students from the time they enter the school. Students may be well-known by teachers and

students whom I did not have the opportunity to observe; however, it's hard to imagine because of all the time they spend in ELL classes with ELL students.

In her study of four high school ELL students, Harklau (1994) concludes, The ESL program provided students with assistance in adjusting to U.S. life and society which was unavailable in the mainstream. . . .In sum, ESL performed a different and valuable role in students' education in terms of socializing students into U.S. society. It also facilitated the development of a supportive peer group while they made the transition. Although students were undoubtedly isolated socially from native speakers of English when they were in ESL, the formidable impediments that students perceived to social interaction with native speakers made them equally isolated in mainstream classes. In the complex social world of high school adolescents, one could not simply assume that proximity would ensure interaction. In this context, opportunities afforded by ESL classes took on extra significance, creating one place in the school where students regularly interacted in English, albeit with fellow nonnative speakers" (p.266).

As I observed at Jefferson, Harklau also points to the importance of the ELL community for students as they enter and move through high school.

Although not all ELL students need to maintain a strong connection to their ELL community throughout their high school years, Jefferson's experience shows that for many students, the ELL community may act as a vital connection to school. The loss of that community may set students too much adrift so that they cannot manage to complete high school.



Small school conversion at Jefferson has not overtly affected the ELL program structure or operation. However, small school conversion has inadvertently strengthened the expectation that ELL students identify with their small school academy equally or more strongly than they identify with the community of the ELL program. The expectation that ELL students identify with the mainstream academy to which they are assigned may be producing a tension having to do with identity that neither teachers nor students can fully articulate or address. It appears that the ELL program competes with the mainstream academy program and everyone agrees that it is inappropriate for ELL students to identify as ELL even though they do identify as ELL.

In sum, the ELL program at Jefferson was not greatly affected by the small school conversion. The program remained virtually the same before and after the conversion. The changes at Jefferson have more to do with the rest of the school and the overt expectations concerning inclusion that came with the conversion.

*What Impact Did the Implementation of Inclusion Philosophy Have on Inclusive and Equitable Instruction for ELL Students at Jefferson?*

Although the teachers at Jefferson do not sense a tension in their understanding and practice of inclusion, when it is weighed against ideas of equity and social justice, tension emerges. In order to discuss inclusive and equitable instruction for the ELL students at Jefferson, we must return to the idea of the paradox of mainstreaming for ELL students. Jefferson's ELL program provides many sheltered content classes as well as English classes. According to teachers, this sort of sheltering is a strength of the program because students feel supported and can learn content and language at a level

they can manage. Consequently, it could be argued that, in terms of a sheltered ELL program offering appropriate instruction, students at Jefferson are receiving an equitable education inside the ELL program.

On the other hand, the mainstreaming at Jefferson has been somewhat unsuccessful both in terms of elective and content area classes. Although these are sometimes inappropriate because of language level, students must go to mainstream classes because of limitations in scheduling and staffing. In this case, mainstreaming is not inclusion because it is not addressing the language acquisition needs of students.

The manner in which the ELL program at Jefferson is structured as a hub program outside of the mainstream program does not increase inclusive education for the students at Jefferson. Jefferson does not have an overt ideal of inclusion in the way that CES promotes inclusion. In addition, the ELL teachers at Jefferson believe that they offer an equitable educational program through the multi-leveled program that seeks to shelter students within an ELL program until they are proficient enough to enter the mainstream academic program. The teachers perceive their desire and ability to offer the multi-leveled “protective” program as a step toward equity for the ELL students.

#### *Observational Data from Jefferson High School*

Observations at Jefferson High School afforded me the opportunity to form my own impressions about the operation of school after its conversion. As a visitor to the school, I found that it did not look or feel significantly different than a regular comprehensive high school would. I entered at a central office to sign in. A central office

principal's office sat behind the reception area. The office workers did not act as though they knew the students who requested assistance in the office.

The hallways of the school showed the most evidence that the school had converted to small schools. Handmade posters on the wall advertised events associated with one of the small schools. These posters were the only place I saw the names of the three schools or the events and activities that might be related to them. The school is loosely organized so that the three small schools have dedicated areas, but when walking the halls, I could not tell whether I had crossed from one school area into another. Also, there are many shared spaces at Jefferson because the building was not built to accommodate small schools. The schools share the library, athletic facilities, cafeteria and science labs.

My impressions of the physical organization of the school are a reflection of the school's conversion. During their conversion, teachers and administrators decided not to demand autonomy for the small schools. Schools who demand autonomy often have to make difficult decisions about cutting elective programs in favor of offering academic core classes. Elective programs are sacrificed if a school demands autonomy because elective programs usually would have to be shared among schools, resulting in a serious compromise to autonomy. In order to allow students to have the large, varied menu of class choices offered in a comprehensive high school, teachers and administrators at Jefferson decided to allow crossovers.

Wehlage and Newman (1996) define autonomy as both "the autonomy from external constraints and teachers' influence over their work within the school." (39) At

Jefferson, external constraints and the lack of teachers' influence over their work is made clear by the fact that the school allows crossovers. Crossovers pose a serious threat to autonomy in small schools. "Crossing over" means that students from one school are allowed to take a class at another school if their school doesn't offer the class. Allowing crossovers makes many other levels of autonomy impossible. Schools must keep the same time schedules if crossovers are allowed. Students may not identify strongly with their small school. The small schools may not develop their own identities because students can crossover to other schools. In short, if the school allows crossovers, the school will have much less chance of becoming different from a comprehensive high school because decisions will be ruled by scheduling rather than the learning needs of students. The fact that Jefferson allows crossovers is a conversion issue that is reflected in the ambiguity of their use of space.

Crossovers have also made an impact on the ELL program at Jefferson. Through crossovers, the academies offer the ELL transitional level courses. Each academy offers one or two transitional level courses and ELL students leave their home academy to take the necessary class in another academy, where it is offered. Therefore, crossing over to take the transitional level classes creates another time when ELL students are not in their home school. The combination of strong identification with the ELL program, joining their mainstream academy late in their school career and crossing over to gain necessary academic credits compromises ELL students' ability to understand with which community they should most identify.

Instructionally, observations showed that mainstream classes at Jefferson use traditional instructional techniques. In terms of curriculum, all classes were traditional book based classes. I saw teachers “going over” homework, and assigning new homework. Teachers often asked students to open to a page and begin working. I saw very little instruction on new learning. In language arts classes, all students read a class text regardless of their reading levels. Students sat in rows or table groups. Teachers did not model work, explain their thinking or ask students to explain their thinking.

A case in point was a pre-algebra class I observed. For ELL students, it is labeled a “transition” class. The class was actually a low-level tracked math class whose population was about one third ELL students. The other two-thirds of the class were comprised of students who qualify for special education and students with a record of low achievement. Placing ELL students in this class creates two potential issues for ELL learning. First, because the class was populated with mainstream students, math content was the focus. There was no evidence in the room or among the students that the class helped them learn more language for math. The ELL students were sitting in table groups with other ELL students speaking a mix of native language and English. They did not interact with the mainstream students.

The second issue surrounding placing ELL students in low level tracked mainstream classes has to do with whether it is an appropriate placement in relation to math learning. Walqui (2000) warns against placing ELL students in low level tracked mainstream classes because they may lack a sense of urgency in learning. ELL students

who are capable in math, but not English may feel insulted or discouraged when placed in low-level math classes.

A transition class for science suffered from the teacher using inappropriate methods for language learners. All of the students enrolled in the class were ELL students, so in that way it was an ELL focused class. However, the class exemplified the problem of an ELL class taught by a teacher trained in a content area without training in ELL methods. In this class, lack of language instruction and structures made the learning and classroom atmosphere chaotic. The teacher wanted students to use microscopes to look at bacteria but did not teach the words related to the microscopes or a procedure for getting them out or using them. Therefore, as students tried to complete the task, they did not have language for asking questions about the use and care of the microscopes. Additionally, the teacher did not model the task with the microscope so students did not know what they should find when looking in the microscope. Students had a much difficulty helping each other with the task because they did not have a model or language to talk about it. While this teacher surely knew science, he used no methods appropriate for language learners and neither the learning nor the classroom management on that day was not as effective as it might have been.

Observations of Jefferson High School revealed dissonance between the ELL teachers' perceptions and the actual instructional practice at the school. The schools' lack of autonomy and lack of focus on improving instruction are the main reasons this dissonance exists. Teachers want the school to be the way they describe it. Teachers want ELL students to have good experiences in mainstream classes. They also want

mainstream teachers to be effective for ELL populations. But, because there is little autonomy and the school still feels quite large and comprehensive, the ELL teachers and program remain as isolated as they ever were. They do not have the opportunity to work with other teachers or really know what is happening in mainstream classes.

The lack of instructional change is an issue that contributes to the problems of mainstreaming and inclusion at Jefferson High School. If teachers do not attend to changing instruction, the school will continue to be forced to run a separate ELL program where students mainstream for convenience rather than social justice. Without a change in instruction, ELL students will not find success in mainstream classes. From the interviews with ELL teachers and from the observations of ELL classrooms, it is clear that the faculty of Jefferson High School has not focused on changing instructional techniques in order to differentiate for language learners. Instead, the ELL teachers attempt to create a multi-leveled program that will keep students in ELL until they know enough English to manage understanding language-poor instruction in mainstream classrooms. An instructional focus on differentiation and language learning might help teachers at Jefferson begin to create truly inclusive classrooms.

## CHAPTER V

### CEDAR VIEW HIGH SCHOOL

Like the previous chapter, this chapter describes the conversion of a single school. The chapter tells the story of a difficult conversion that has left many issues unresolved. First, interview data is used to describe the ELL program through a couple of phases of conversion. Then, the research questions are considered in relation to Cedar View's context. Finally, observational data describes the school and instructional environment.

The sources of tension at Cedar View High School are caused primarily by parties that have competing interests and have used the ELL program to advance their own agendas. District administrators have been working to standardize the curriculum and instruction in "special" programs such as special education and ELL. School administrators want to disperse the ELL population from where it is housed in one school in the hope of stifling gang activity among Latino students. ELL teachers want to maintain the ELL program in one small school in order to build academic and social community.

While competing interests would be detrimental to the focus of any ELL program, they are particularly detrimental at Cedar View because of the small size of the ELL population. The fact that Cedar View's population is only about 6% of the total school population creates paradoxes between the philosophy of inclusion and the practice of inclusion. The instructional innovation and personalization necessary to



support ESL students in mainstream classrooms are not present at Cedar View. Moreover, the real impetus for inclusion at Cedar View is to disperse the Latino population who are heavily gang-involved. At Cedar View, neither the philosophy nor practice of inclusion is related to ideals of democracy or social justice. At Cedar View, “inclusion” is little more than the dispersal of a population.

The conversion of Cedar View High School has been long and painful for both the school and the community. Unlike Jefferson, Cedar View’s conversion was not influenced by faculty. Instead, the principal at the time submitted a grant proposal to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in order to receive a grant that would help convert the large school to small schools. After receiving the grant, the faculty was informed that the school would be structured as small schools for the coming year. Faculty could choose the school they preferred and those who did not choose were placed in a school by the administration. According to Sean Kennedy, a 33-year veteran of the school district, the change was unilateral and divisive.

I don’t know how much of the politics you want to get into but it wasn’t really done in a school-wide fashion. It was written, it was submitted to us, and they said, “Okay this is what we’re going to do.” And that was sort of it. So, it’s crucial because there wasn’t really a buy-in at first.

And that was the big problem. If there would have been more buy-in by the staff, I think it would have been more successful. And would have been a program that everybody believed in and felt that it was the best way to go. But the way that it was done was a little bit different than that

because we were kind of told. “We got the grant, so next year we are going to be going into small schools.” I was on site council and there’d been discussion about it and we knew that the principal had submitted the grant, but the entire staff was not really in tune with what was going on or what small schools were or what it meant (Mr. Kennedy, June 7, 2007).

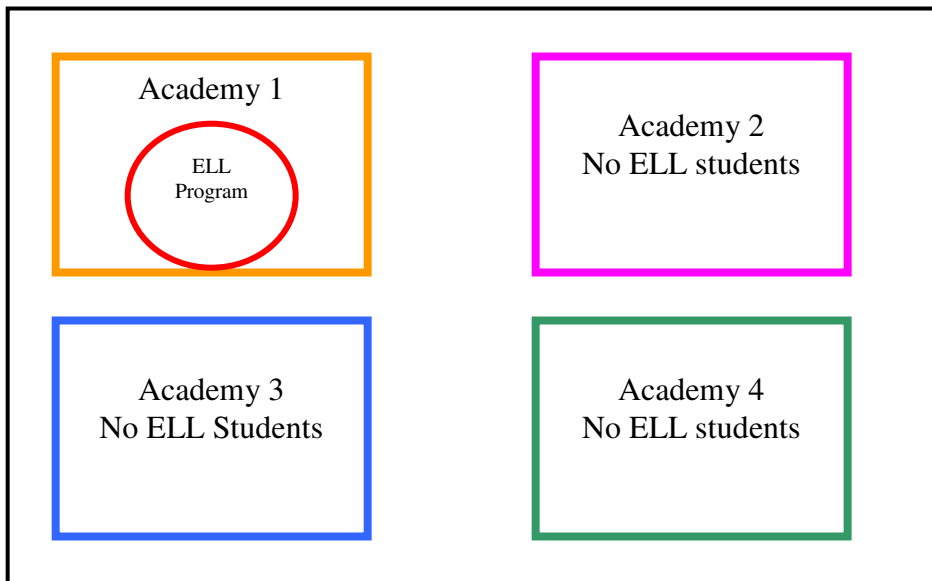
Mr. Kennedy also reports that for the next five years, Cedar View routinely lost 40% of the faculty at the end of the each school year.

In addition to the lack of faculty buy-in to conversion, Cedar View struggles with a lack of community buy-in. Cedar View High School has a strong alumni legacy with many alumni still living in the area. The conversion happened quickly, and, according to the current principal, without sufficient community engagement to gain community buy-in. Consequently, the community did not support the conversion.

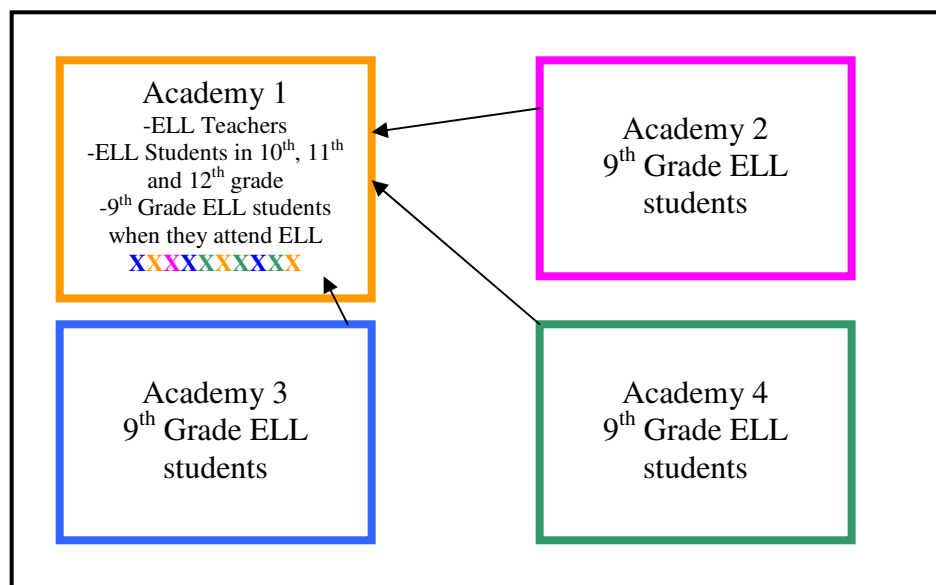
The lack of community and faculty buy-in during the conversion characterizes and explains Cedar View’s current situation. The school received the grant in 2000-2001 and became small schools in 2001-2002. Since then, they have experienced massive faculty turnover and employed three successive principals. Perhaps because of their conversion history, the small schools at Cedar View are still very much a work in progress. The current administration is working hard to support the reform so that the small school structure can help improve student learning. That being said, one gets the feeling of a

comprehensive school rather than a small school. The use of the building does not feel different than in a comprehensive school and the academies do not have identities that are sufficiently strong for a visitor to perceive them.

The year I studied the program at Cedar View was a year of significant change in the ELL program. At the end of the previous year, Mr. Kennedy retired after a 33 year career working in the district, spending much of his time at Cedar View. Mr. Kennedy had been the primary advocate for English language learners at Cedar View. He controlled many aspects of the ELL program, including student and course planning. Up until his retirement, the ELL program at Cedar View had been housed within only one of the academies. The ELL population at Cedar View makes up only about 7% of the total population of the school, and is staffed with two full time teachers. Because the population was small when the school converted, the ELL program stayed in one academy. The other academies did not serve ELL students. Figure 3 shows the configuration of the ELL program in relation to the other academies at Cedar View prior to the 2006-2007 school year.

**FIGURE 2****Configuration of Cedar View High School's ELL Program Before 2006-2007**

In the year after Mr. Kennedy's retirement, the administrators decided to disperse the ELL program to every academy with the incoming class of ninth graders. Tenth, eleventh and twelfth graders would stay in the academy where they had been but ninth graders would be placed in equal numbers in each academy. Figure 4 shows the configuration of the ELL program in relation to the academies for the 2006-2007 school year.

**FIGURE 3****Configuration of Cedar View High School's ELL Program 2006-2007**

During the year that I studied Cedar View, the ELL program reflected the preceding diagram.

Many aspects of the ELL program at Cedar View feel chaotic because both the district and the building administrators have been unhappy with the program structure. In attempts to “fix” the ELL program, many actors have taken action upon it. First, school administrators changed the program structure without teacher input. When Mr. Kennedy retired, the school administrators decided to try inclusion throughout the four small schools again for the sake of inclusive and equitable education for ELL students. Simultaneously, at the district level, the department for special services was working to standardize curriculum and instruction for ELL students throughout the district. In order to introduce new curriculum, they instituted mandatory meetings, which take ELL

teachers out of small school meetings. A third, subtler force is Mr. Kennedy himself. Although retired, Mr. Kennedy still volunteers his time to do scheduling for ELL classes and students. He does not support the current restructuring of the ELL program and although he is not a combative presence, he is still an oppositional presence to the building administrators. Because three groups with different interests have played roles in determining the direction of the ELL program, the program does not presently demonstrate a clear focus.

That being said, while some confusion surrounds the purpose and programming of the ELL program, all the players have a similar goal in mind. Everyone who participated in interviews had the sincere intention to structure the ELL program so that it serves students as well as possible.

*How Has the ELL Program Supported Inclusive Education at Cedar View?*

Inclusive education at Cedar View was compromised by applying inclusion philosophy in situations where it did not fit. While CES advocates for inclusive communities, Cedar View does not have the philosophical or practical resources in place to support inclusion. In addition, their small ELL population actually received less academic and social support after the inclusion plan was put into practice due to a loss of community.

During the 2006-2007 school year, the ELL program at Cedar View was not able to be highly supportive of inclusive education although the school was attempting to begin an inclusive program. In order to support the inclusion program, 9<sup>th</sup> grade ELL

students had a mainstream language arts class that was followed up by an ELL class that worked to directly support the language arts class.

Administrators had advocated for 9<sup>th</sup> grade ELL students to be in mainstream classes along with their regular ELL schedule. Administrators reported that inclusion was working well for the ninth graders who had inclusion classes, but the ELL teacher wondered whether those students were finding the academic support and personalization they might need in order to succeed.

Differences emerged in the perceptions of the success ELL students experienced in mainstream classes. Celia Carr, an administrator of a small school that had not previously had ELL students, reported that ELL students who belonged to her academy were doing very well as ninth graders because they were finding the necessary support through a combination of ELL and advisory in the small school academy.

We made that decision because they were the higher students. We just believed that we could support them and, with their peers, they could be included in the language arts class and then be supported in their ELL class. We're not through the semester. My observation is it seems to be working, but we did not move teachers this time. We still have these two teachers but the two teachers are in one house. They're starting to support students in all houses. What's different [than the other time this was attempted at Cedar View] is now all small schools have an advisory in place. And the advisory helps support the kids too. It's an academic support. It helps with exhibition work, because that's one of the big

things that the teachers in ELL said. They said, “We can’t know all the small schools exhibitions and help kids.” But now, advisory helps those kids. Advisory at ninth grade is also a lot about the transition to high school. And in a sense that’s a support for all kids, but it helps the ELL with that transition. Out of the advisories, we do the student-led parent conferences. I know the teachers of my freshman advisories said that it looked a lot different this year. They had more Hispanic conferences in Spanish (Ms. Carr, December 7, 2006).

Ms. Carr describes success for ninth graders in mainstream language arts, which is supported by ELL classes and in advisories.

On the other hand, Indira Henig, a first year ELL teacher, expressed some doubts about whether beginning ELL students can develop a sense of community in small school academies where there are no ELL teachers. Ms. Henig agrees that students who have mainstream language arts supported by ELL are doing reasonably well in language arts. She remains concerned about math and science, where students generally receive little ELL support.

I would say my students are not successful at math and science. I think with the more advanced students, it’s a little bit better, but my students that are lower, I’d say approximately 90% of them are failing math and science. There’s even a sort of sheltered math class where they’re not succeeding. In humanities, it seems like there’s more success and more support, which makes sense to me. There’s more language focus. And I



have a language arts ELL class. Those kids are also in English class, so they get their language arts class and then they get the support specifically about, for example, using writing prompts, reading the rubric, understanding the rubric. So they get a kind of academic support specifically for humanities (Ms. Henig, May 15, 2007).

Ms. Henig perceived the role of advisories for ELL students quite differently than Ms. Carr did. Ms. Henig felt that ELL students in mainstream advisories might not really be connecting to adults or other students because of their isolation in the non-ELL academies.

It's really difficult in terms of safety and community building for the beginning students who are not in the house. Both of the two ELL teachers are considered to be in the Travelers Academy. When there's a kid who is not in that house, I think the student is a little alienated because they don't have a place to go where people know their situation. They are kind of lost. Things like Advisory too. If there's an advisory in a different house that doesn't have a lot of ELL kids and the student does not speak English, I think they miss out on a lot of that community building (Ms. Henig, May 15, 2007).

Ms. Henig questions mainstream teachers' ability to create truly inclusive, personalized environments for ELL students where they can help ELL students fit in socially and academically even if they are the only language learner in the room.

In the year I studied Cedar View, I got the sense that because of the gap left by Mr. Kennedy's retirement, the ELL program was a passive player in the education of ELL students. Rather than proactively participating in creating an innovative ELL program, ELL teachers had been removed from planning and programming for ELL. Ms. Henig was concerned about ways in which the ELL program might be able to help support students, but she was not allowed to attend weekly decision-making meetings surrounding curriculum and programming for ELL students in the academies. Instead, she was required to attend district level meetings to introduce a new curriculum.

In addition to not being able to attend meetings concerning planning for ELL students in academies, Ms. Henig was disoriented in helping ELL students solve issues in their mainstream classes because they were in all four academies. She described,

I know for me, being new, and being in my first year with all the different houses, it's organizationally a real nightmare to know, for example, what counselor to talk to for each kid and how to build relationships with all the different houses and their administrators and their routines for each kid. It's really difficult. It's much easier for me to hook into that network with the kids in my small school because most of the kids are still in this one place and I can just see there's a system where people know their families and it's easier to get support from the administration (Ms. Henig, May 15, 2007).

Although Ms. Henig wanted to support ELL students in their classes throughout the school, she found that both the mandates on the use of her time and the organization of the program were deterrents to achieving that goal.

*In What Ways Has Small School Inclusion Affected the ELL Program at Cedar View?*

The competing ideas of the use and practice of inclusion has greatly affected the ELL program at Cedar View. At the beginning of the conversion, the change to small schools affected the ELL program positively. Mr. Kennedy was very happy to be able to house the ELL program in one of the small schools because it reduced the number of adults he needed to try to work with in order to support ELL students. He explained,

Well, of course for me, I thought it was great. Because it meant that all of my kids would be in Journeys Academy. I would have two teachers in Math, two teachers in Science, English that I needed to work with.

Before, I had to work with eight math teachers doing their own thing. It was all under one high school, but they were all doing their own thing.

They were all doing their own materials, their own place in the book. So to have a study skills session in math was impossible because I had to deal with too many classes. In my class, I had eight different teachers that my kids were exposed to. Just in math-- in algebra I! So, it was almost impossible to do any type of a study skills or give them assistance. Now, I can do that because I know those two math teachers. I know what they're doing. They send me their daily work and say, "this is what we're doing today." So if kids have questions, I can answer those questions. I know

when they're going to have their test so I can remind them. So I was all for it (Mr. Kennedy, June 7, 2007).

Cedar View is a school that is overtly struggling with inclusion philosophy at a basic operational level. The administrators at the school have advocated to place ELL students in all four small school academies while the ELL department has advocated to keep the ELL population in only one of the small school academies. At Cedar View, the small size of the ELL population sharply illuminates the philosophical tension between ELL support and mainstream inclusion.

Cedar View's ELL population is only about 7% of the school, or between 60 and 80 students. Although this number of students is many for one small academy to absorb, it is not many in relation to the population of the entire school. In the summer of 2006, administrators at Cedar View were anticipating a steep increase in the population of ELL students. Numbers were expected to jump to about 140 ELL students. The increase in numbers, concerns about inclusion and equity and the retirement of Mr. Kennedy motivated administrators to restructure the ELL program so that the incoming ninth grade ELL students would be placed equally in all four small school academies. The tenth, eleventh and twelfth graders would remain in the one small school academy they had always attended.

Charles Gray, the central principal of the school, mentioned several reasons related to equitable education for ELL students as the motivation for the change in programming. One of the reasons for changing the ELL program mentioned by all the administrators was an unequal racial distribution throughout the school. Because one

academy had ELL, that academy also had more Hispanic students than other academies.

Mr. Gray explains,

One of the other changes we made last year is that we went to four lunches. So each small learning community had its own lunch. When you went out to first lunch you saw all the Hispanic kids there. Well, that's not right. You could just look and go well, 'you have an equity problem' (Mr. Gray, July 13, 2006).

Ron Clausen, the administrator at one of the small school academies describes similar thinking about equitable distribution of students based on race.

One reason [we changed the program] was just equity. [Having the students in one academy] screwed up the demographics a lot. And then that messes everything up--from test scores . . . There also became a concern about getting the ELL kids in among other students. Keeping them all together we had a fairly active Hispanic gang, MS13. So this year, administratively, we made the decision, you know, we had to look at doing it differently again (Mr. Clausen, December 7, 2006).

Celia Carr, the administrator of the small school academy that housed the ELL program also explained the equity issues in terms of the rights of ELL students to not be segregated and the rights of the small school academies to have equal population distributions.

And part of the issue is, we were really looking at the fact that when all the students were concentrated in my small school, it was a third of my

population. Almost a third was ELL students, which had a very significant impact upon the small school. And also there's an equity issue because there's no other population in the district that's isolated in that way. I hate to look at it from the burden perspective. . . (Ms. Carr, December 7, 2006).

Although administrators have been concerned about the physical placement of ELL students in the small school academies, the former head of the ELL department, Mr. Kennedy, resisted placing students in all four small school academies. He did not think it served students well in terms of content area support for them to be outside of one academy. Mr. Kennedy had reason to believe that the ELL population was too small to excel outside of the one small school school academy. In the third year of conversion, the school had tried a similar plan. That year, the ELL population was divided among the four small school academies. The next year, it was brought back again to one small school academy.

Ms. Carr described the history surrounding the program changes, The second year we kind of questioned about maybe moving the students out and so the year of 2003 we put them in two schools. Only for one year. We put them in two schools because there were two teachers. And so, and then we divided them, the students, according to the teacher they were mostly with. So, not the department chair, but the other teacher joined my small school as part of the staff for that one year. And then the department chair said, "that's really too hard on the two of us teachers.

There's too many grade level exhibitions for us to have to know. And so, based on the department chair, we went back the following year and so now were in 2004 and in 2005 they [ELL students] were back in Journeys Academy again. There were still, there were concerns among, the administrative team (Ms. Carr, December 7, 2006).

Ms. Carr's description of the problem shows a clear division between philosophy and actual practice of inclusion. The administrative team had philosophical reasons to include ELL students even though the practical work of providing education to ELL students is made harder by it.

As the ELL department chair, Mr. Kennedy describes the struggle with inclusion philosophy at Cedar View with a teacher's point of view.

They [the administrators] talked to me about that every year and tried to get me to move those kids out. And I said you can't do it. If you're going to provide support for those students in a small school, they've got to all be in one small school, or one center. Now, it can be it's own small school unto itself. But then you've got the problem with the content. You're going to have to crossover, or you're going to have to impact one small school in the content areas, which they didn't want to do. They feel that their scores are low because of the ELL/Special Education populations that are . . . They're looking at it in terms of how does it look to the state. Not, how does it look (Mr. Kennedy June 7, 2007).

The conflict Mr. Kennedy describes arises between the idea that inclusion is good for the small school academies as well as for the students and the idea that inclusion without sufficient academic support will cause students to be academically unsuccessful.

During the 2006-2007 school year, there was a flexible plan for supporting ELL students in mainstream or inclusion environments. Administrators at Cedar View mentioned several ways they would like to see the ELL department support ELL students in mainstream classes. Most of these had to do with ELL staffing that was ultimately unfulfilled for the 2006-2007 school year. Margaret Hawkins, a district level administrator mentioned a peer tutor program for newcomer ELL students that would help them survive in mainstream classes.

We thought we might try a newcomers program with this half time new position and it may not work this year. Our idea was to have a newcomer program and have those kids totally immersed in English language acquisition for a period of time, going out into general education only during electives with peer tutors. And those would be kids who have been in the program and transitioned out or more advanced kids. What we're finding in the small schools is that they don't have enough electives for everyone. And so we're thinking if we could get, if we could get kind of like a peer tutor group with some training on how to be a good peer tutor, that could be, then we could give that as an opportunity (Ms. Hawkins, July 18, 2006).



In addition to implementing a peer-tutoring program, Ms. Hawkins thought that clustering ELL students in content area classes and placing paraeducators for ELL in those classes as another support that would help ELL students manage mainstream classes.

Our paraeducators we want to um, put out in the mainstream to help the kids in their sciences and math and stuff (Ms. Hawkins, July 18, 2006).

Like Ms. Hawkins, Charles Gray, the central principal of Cedar View, also had a plan for how to use faculty to the greatest advantage for ELL students.

Our argument is that we need the two ELL teachers plus that .5 teacher that they [the district] think they can give us because of the funding.

Give that ELL teacher to us as well and we'll pay for the other half out of LAP funds. Because those kids are probably going to be LAP impacted as well. And then, give us two paraeducators on top of that.

And then what we want to do in terms of the way the structure would look is that, since we've got a couple of small schools where there are teachers that are Spanish speakers. So what we want to do is take advantage of that. So, with the four small schools, this is going to be the one that houses the level one kids. And they'll be there and they'll have a few level ones. They'll also have some level twos. They'll have a 1.0 ELL person (Mr. Gray, July 13, 2006).

Since staffing restrictions would make it impossible to place an ELL teacher in every small school, Mr. Gray was counting on the idea that teachers who speak Spanish, even

though they may not be the ELL students' teachers, would be available to help with translation and other issues that might require Spanish language use.

For the 2006-2007 school year these ideas were not put into practice because of a lack of staffing. By October, the ELL teaching staff had been reduced from 2.5 teachers to 2.0 teachers because the ELL population did not grow as large as had been predicted. The structure of the actual program was that all tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade ELL students remained in Journeys Academy, as in the past, while ninth graders were assigned to all four academies for their content area courses. Ninth graders came to Journeys Academy for their ELL classes. Therefore, for the 2006-2007 school year, ELL did not have the necessary organization or staffing to support ELL students in inclusion.

For the first year teacher who had just joined the school, the ELL program was confusing and unfocused. She confided,

I'm just kind of waiting for that conversation of like . . . I have six classes that I teach. The other ELL teacher has six classes that she teaches. What are they? Which ones are necessary? Which ones are helpful? So that dialogue hasn't happened since I've been here so I just kind of was handed the structure of what was here. And trying to figure out, well, what were these classes, these six classes. What were they? Before. What should they be now? I'm just dying to ask, "how can I really make these make sense to me in context of the small school and what the other classes these kids have." (Ms. Henig, May 15, 2007).

In the context of this conversation, the teacher asks rhetorically what the ELL classes are because she is not sure the classes are doing a sufficient job of supporting ELL students. Although she knows what classes she and the other ELL teacher teach, she questions whether they provide the most effective schedule possible to ELL students.

*What Impact Did the Implementation of Inclusion Philosophy Have on Inclusive and Equitable Instruction for ELL Students at Cedar View?*

At Cedar View, the impact of attempting to practice inclusion has been detrimental to both instruction and community for ELL students. In relation to CES's definition of inclusion, ELL students at Cedar View are not participating in equitable or inclusive education either within or outside of the ELL program. Rather, they are participating in mainstreamed education. Interviews revealed that administrators, in particular, are considering inclusion. In this case, though, the move toward inclusion resulted mostly in disbanding the ELL program. Students were mainstreamed without support. Also, all of the administrators fail to mention CES's main reason for inclusion, which is to increase social justice and educational equity for marginalized populations.

Interviews and data show that Cedar View's ELL programming cannot provide truly equitable and inclusive education for ELL students because it is locked in a competition for leadership. Administrators support mainstreaming as a way to break up and isolate Spanish speakers who are gang involved. ELL teachers do not support mainstreaming because they believe it abandons students and compromises their potential for success. District administrators are working to standardize curriculum and

instruction. None of the parties involved in the ELL programming have a point of view about inclusion that supports democracy or equity.

*Observational Data from Cedar View High School*

Like Jefferson High School, Cedar View High School maintains a large central office. Visitors find a long counter, which acts as a barrier between the school and the central office administrators. Also like Jefferson, there is very little about the physical environment of the classrooms or hallways that would indicate how the building is delineated into small schools. A few posters indicated the area of one of the small schools. In many of the same ways as Jefferson, Cedar View has suffered in issues of school reform because of the small schools' lack of autonomy.

Cedar View's lack of autonomy has produced a more chaotic feeling than that of Jefferson High School perhaps because of the difference in conversion influences. At Jefferson, teachers planned and organized the conversion to small schools. At Cedar View, a principal planned the conversion without the knowledge or consent of the faculty. Because Jefferson's conversion was a bottom-up process originating with the concerns of teachers, the instruction and organization at Jefferson is coherent. In interviewing teachers at Jefferson, it is clear that they make and execute decisions for the operation of the school. Instruction and programming throughout the school maintain certain level of consistency.

At Cedar View, consistency in instruction and programming is missing. Decisions at Cedar View continue to be top-down, which shows in the chaotic management of the ELL program. My classroom observations showed that there is a

lack of consistency in terms of the expectations and practices within each classroom as well.

At Cedar View, individual classroom teachers determine their own teaching practice. Every classroom I observed was a different experience based on the personality of the teacher. One mainstream language arts class I went to was using a writer's workshop model. A marine biology class with several ELL students in it included a forty-minute lecture full of specialized terms. The teacher did not provide any visuals or written vocabulary. The teacher of an advanced ELL class allowed students to chat or sleep for the first twenty minutes of first period. She later told me that she has decided not to start on time because students arrive late and then she feels she has to start over.

While observing at Cedar View High School, I rarely saw any evidence that I was in a conversion small school. The schools lack unity of vision, mission and practice. The school felt so much like a bad comprehensive high school that I often wondered what work had been done in terms of becoming small schools.

Although the current administrators often used words like equity and inclusion, ELL students at Cedar View were mostly sitting in the back of class. If they were not in an ELL class, no special provisions for inclusion were made for them apart from the singular ninth grade ELL supported language arts class. At Cedar View, students were either in ELL or out in mainstream classes. If students were in mainstream classes, very little differentiation or language learning was happening.

## CHAPTER VI

### MCKINLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Chapter VI details the conversion of McKinley High School. The chapter will follow a similar structure to the previous two chapters. First, it gives a description of the conversion process and the decisions made about ELL at McKinley. Second, interview data is used to answer the research questions in regards to McKinley's context. Next, observational data describes the physical surroundings of the school as well as some instructional programs.

At McKinley High School, inclusion philosophy is practiced differently than it is at the other two schools because of an intentional focus on instructional change. Of the three schools, administrators and staff at McKinley talked most frequently of inclusion as a philosophical practice promoting democratic practice and equity. Administrators and staff linked instructional change to successful inclusion practice due to a belief that all students can be taught in similar environments if teachers have the instructional expertise to assess and differentiate instruction.

Because of a strong, focused belief in inclusion philosophy, the ELL teachers and programs at McKinley have struggled much more than at the other two schools to provide appropriate instruction for ELL students within an inclusion environment. At McKinley, teachers have had to struggle with whether newcomer and beginner ELL students can be appropriately educated in mainstream classrooms. Consequently,

mainstream and ELL teachers have created more programmatic and instructional innovations.

McKinley High School's conversion story is characterized by an organic research process initiated by administrators and staff members. More than the other two conversion schools participating in this research, the administrators and teachers at McKinley cite outside research and trips to successful small schools as inspiration and models for the conversion at McKinley. McKinley began its conversion several years after the other two participating schools. Thus, the conversion process at McKinley enjoyed the advantage the other schools' experience in a way the other two schools did not.

The small school conversion at McKinley High School began in 2002 because of frustrations with achievement and culture among students and staff. The principal at that time, Naomi Delamarter, described the beginning.

I think it was a combination of knowing we needed to change, but not really knowing what to do, so we all sort of had that deer in the headlights sort of phase. And for a lot of good reasons, we sort of picked the path of small schools. And I think one of the things we really did well was when we made a decision we really stuck to it and were very aggressive in going after it. So, it was definitely driven by a need to change. We knew we needed to be less institutionalized and more personal and improve teaching. We also knew small schools were better for adults to improve their practice. We knew it was better

for kids to build relationships between each other and the adults (Ms. Delamarter, August 10, 2007).

Eventually, the focus of the conversion narrowed to three main topics, which were personalization, improved instruction and inclusion.

McKinley's strong focus on instruction and inclusion sets apart its conversion from Jefferson and Cedar View. Although the vision of improved instruction and inclusion was strong for mainstream and special education students, the staff struggled with planning appropriate programming for ELL. Several teachers and administrators recounted the difficulty of knowing how to convert ELL. Annabel Chung, a mainstream teacher who was on the administrative planning team during the conversion, explained the difficulty of converting a previously ineffective ELL program into an entirely new system.

I like to think that I believe in inclusion and I want all students to be able to learn together and I really got used to just deferring. Like—"ELL, I'll defer to Rafael Sandoval (an ELL teacher)." I think the other problem was our ELL staffing. There was huge turnover. The people that were put in as ELL teachers were definitely not the most . . . . If you say put the greatest teachers with the greatest need, they were definitely not the greatest teachers. They were incompetent at best and they were not serving our students well at all. There was no consistency. There was no department vision. There was no department philosophy. I think Rafael had the best beliefs of anyone, but his ability to get people together wasn't super. So, it was a dysfunctional system before and it was hard to figure out how



to make function happen from such a dysfunctional system with no district support and no model anywhere in the country. The only models we had were schools where they had one language. Like, they were in cities where they had all Spanish-speaking students. Their model really didn't have to do with English language learning, it had to do with Spanish (Ms. Chung, June 20, 2007).

Ms. Delamarter, the principal during the conversion, recounts that the planning team's inability to find a model that fit for ELL students meant that the program was not dealt with until the end of the conversion.

I remember at that time saying "I have no wisdom," but that's how it came down. I know it was late in the process. I know that the ELL teachers were very concerned. I'm sure that anybody with a true equity agenda would question why ELL kids were left for last. That would be a fair question. And my answer would be it was a question of capacity. We didn't know what we were doing. But that doesn't excuse it (Ms. Delamarter, August 10, 2007).

Although planners at McKinley were unsure about the practical details of planning the ELL programs, they were eventually guided by a strong philosophy of inclusion.

Inclusion of all populations was the main focus of reform at McKinley.

McKinley housed several special programs, including an honor's track program; a program for deaf and hard of hearing students; special education programs that covered the entire spectrum of mental and physical challenges and, an ELL program. Sylvia Green, an assistant principal during the conversion explained that at McKinley, equity was based on inclusion.

I think that I remember that from the beginning we knew that we wanted ELL and SPED in all three schools because we were so clear from the beginning that this was about equity and that's what equity meant to us (Ms. Johnson, June 22, 2007).

Echoing her comments, Ms. Delamarter also links equity with inclusion but reveals more struggle with that connection as it relates to ELL students.

I think we went into it with a philosophical belief on a spectrum. I think Sylvia was the most hard core inclusion. I deeply believed in inclusion, but I always asked Sylvia this question, "Are the kids serving a political philosophy of inclusion, or is inclusion serving kids?" And I wasn't always sure that taking an ELL student or some special education kids out of a specialized instructional environment was what was best, but I think we felt a pretty deep philosophy that as much inclusion as was appropriate should be done. And I think we always struggled with what the heck does that mean for a kid who doesn't speak English. And in my heart, at least, I always wanted them included. But then you see them included in classes where the teacher doesn't know how to teach them, and they're being left out. So I think we did hold a deep philosophy of inclusion (Ms. Delamarter, August 10, 2007).

Like at the other two schools, the ELL teachers at McKinley were concerned about putting students in mainstream classes for too much of the time. During the planning of the ELL program, there was a disagreement between the administration and the teachers concerning the program model that should be instituted. ELL teachers

wanted to create a program like Jefferson 's program with an ELL hub to serve newcomers outside of the three small schools. At the intermediate level, students would choose a small school to join. After teachers proposed this model, administrators rejected it on the grounds that it did not provide for autonomy of small schools and full inclusion of ELL students in small schools.

Vanessa Rowley, an ELL teacher at the school both before and after the conversion, described the concerns of the ELL teachers as being focused primarily on how to teach newcomers if there were no ELL academy.

So there was a discussion about providing support for the beginners. And, then, we really didn't see a way [to have a newcomer center]. And, it wasn't supported on the campus as an option. And so then we looked at different models for supporting the beginners as well as the upper levels. And having enough sections with the staffing. That was always a concern (Ms. Rowley, May 31, 2007).

Ms. Delamarter, the principal of the school at that time, recounts that decision as well as her subsequent doubts about the efficacy of the decision:

I remember when the ELL department proposed doing a newcomer center. And we looked at it through the lens of would it be inclusive enough? What would that mean for their social engagement? Would they be included in their schools? And I think that was a very honest and sincere way to go about it, but I still wonder about if that was the right decision for ELL kids. By doing that, did we not have enough economy of scale and critical mass to offer them the appropriate program (Ms. Delamarter, August 10, 2007).

Although both teachers and administrators were concerned about appropriate placement and instruction for newcomers, administrators made the decision that a newcomer center would not be allowed and asked ELL teachers to think of other ways to run ELL programs. Ms. Rowley remembers this decision as being closely linked to the school's unwavering stance on autonomy for each small school. She said, "It was more, basically, you need to be completely autonomous. You can't merge services for the beginning level in terms of the newcomer center. It wasn't really an option."

A philosophy of inclusion influenced decision making at McKinley enough that when the ELL teachers proposed a program that would maintain a newcomer's center for newly arrived students, it was rejected because it was insufficiently inclusive and because it would not allow for full autonomy among the three small schools. Mr. Sandoval recalls the process of planning the ELL programs from his point of view.

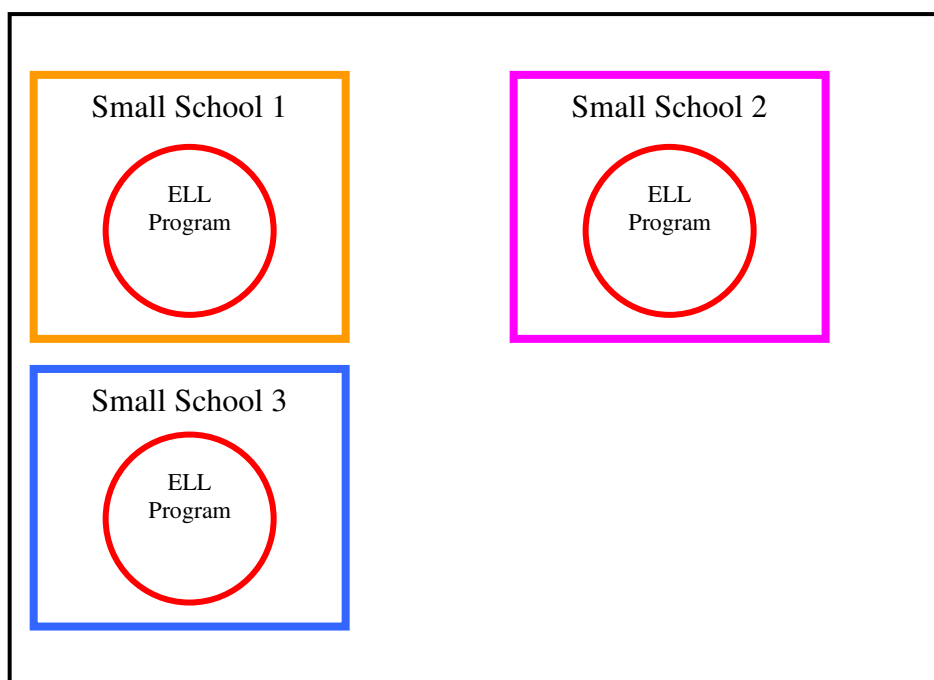
There were, of course, discussions about inclusion, right? Equity. It's actually very foggy and hazy in my mind. I just remember inclusion and equity. And we had, as ELL teachers, a lot of concerns. I think that was when we started talking about a newcomer center. Yes, yes. Should there be a separate newcomer's center apart from the three schools? Actually, I heard both sides of the argument, but I think I was more supportive of a newcomer's center at that time. But then, the idea didn't fly (Mr. Sandoval, June 27, 2007).

In the end, the ELL program at McKinley was structured so that each small school would have its own ELL program where it would serve all levels of ELL. During the first year of conversion, each school received a 1.6 staffing which was increased to

2.0 for each school in the second year of conversion. In terms of the three schools participating in this study, 2.0 staffing for each school is an extremely generous allotment. If the ELL population at all three schools were combined, McKinley usually has about 200 students who qualify for ELL. For those 200 students the school is regularly staffed at 1.6 to 2.0 teachers. This is in contrast with Jefferson, who, for the same population is staffed with 2.5 teachers. A diagram of the ELL programs at McKinley follows:

**FIGURE 4**

**Configuration of McKinley High School's ELL Program**



*How Has the ELL Program Supported Inclusive Education at McKinley?*

Because of the autonomy and staffing provided, the ELL programs in the three small schools at McKinley have been able to support inclusive education for ELL

students in several ways. The ELL programs at all three of the schools at McKinley have supported inclusive education for ELL students by collaborating with mainstream teachers, hand scheduling ELL students into classes where they can be successful and by providing support to students in mainstream classes.

ELL teachers in all three of the schools have been able to collaborate more easily with mainstream teachers since the schools became small. In the small school the scale of teachers and classrooms shrank so that it was possible for the ELL teacher to have an idea of what is happening in classrooms around the campus. More specifically, ELL teachers have been on content area planning teams providing input for the content area planning for language arts and social studies classes. Ms. Rowley, the ELL teacher, describes the change in the relationship between ELL teachers and mainstream teachers:

We have collaborated much more than the old McKinley where there was really no collaboration. It really wasn't very possible. So, we have a grade level system in place. We've had, for the ninth grade level, for example, weekly team meetings-humanities meetings, which include the social studies and the ninth grade language arts teachers and myself. That [having the meetings] has been really beneficial for ELL students to have that ELL input in the lesson design on the front end all along throughout the year. We also do weekly assessment and check-ins and talking about students of concern and the extra support needed on a regular basis. That would not have been possible in the old model with so many sections of classes. So we did blocking and special assignments to certain teachers to really maximize that collaboration and that's, I think that's a major

reason for students' success-the capacity for teachers to communicate regularly (Ms. Rowley, May 31, 2007).

At McKinley, the small school structures have been instrumental in helping teachers create collegial relationships that support collaboration for instruction and student learning. As a more direct support, ELL teachers structured a schedule so that a cohort of intermediate level ELL students took a social studies or language arts class together and also all had an ELL class that provided direct support to the mainstream class they had attended previously that day.

Another important way that all three schools have supported inclusion of ELL students in mainstream classes is through personalized, hand scheduling. At all three schools, the teachers work closely with the counselors and with the mainstream teachers to make sure that students are in appropriate leveled classes. Because of previous education, students who are in beginning reading do not necessarily have to be in beginning math. The smallness of the school makes hand scheduling more possible because teachers are more likely, because of personalization, to know the abilities of students. Not only do teachers know students' abilities more intimately, teachers also have much more opportunity to talk with one another about student progress and ability.

*In What Ways Has Small School Inclusion Affected the ELL Program at McKinley?*

The small school conversion affected the ELL programs at McKinley in ways that were unforeseen to the teachers during the planning phase. During the planning phase teachers were concerned about providing enough support to newcomers and

beginners. Once the programs came to fruition, it became clear that the intermediate level students were a larger concern.

The ELL teachers at McKinley proposed a newcomer center to serve the campus because of their concern for appropriately supporting a large population of preliterate African newcomers. Ms. Rowley explains, “Overall, one of focus areas was, how can we provide newcomer support? So there was a discussion about that for the beginners, and we really didn’t see a way.” Soon, however, the decision not to allow a newcomer’s center was made and ELL teachers chose the small school where they wanted to create an ELL program.

Interviews with the teachers reveal that support of beginners has not actually been the programmatic issue anticipated during the conversion. Instead, the issue has centered around ways to support intermediate students. All three of the small schools at McKinley have, out of necessity, created ELL programs that are highly supportive to newcomers and beginners. Newcomers and beginners spend the majority of their day in ELL classes. Usually, they have only one mainstream elective class. Unfortunately, in order to support the beginners it takes the equivalent of one full time teaching position. Taking up one full time position’s hours leaves the equivalent of one more full time teaching position to teach intermediate and advanced classes, which are the majority of the ELL population.

The intermediate level at McKinley has become a programmatic issue in ways that were unanticipated before the conversion. When ELL programs opened in each of the three small schools, the programs lost the ability to provide multiple levels of ELL.



While McKinley had offered Beginning I, Beginning II, Intermediate I, Intermediate II and Advanced ELL classes prior to the conversion, after the conversion, classes were boiled down to Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced.

Then, we had many more sections. Now, we're trying to provide for the same number of levels at three different sites with fewer teachers at each site. Fewer people available at any given time at each small school. There used to be two sections of beginners, I believe. There were two BI (Beginning I) classes. Yes, there were two sections and they were BI. And BII (Beginning II) was separate. Also, before the conversion, ELL students were sitting in the library as T.A.s Beginners. Just sitting there doing nothing. So they were, for two or three periods of the day, they were not engaged in literacy classes. And now, we're all making an effort for at least, a maximum of like one period not in ELL, basically, which is a great improvement. I think the quality of that has really increased (Ms. Rowley, May 31, 2007).

Ms. Rowley reasserts the point made earlier by Ms. Chung that the ELL program prior to conversion was dysfunctional in terms of providing appropriate instruction to ELL students even though there were many levels available. Ms. Rowley explains the change in levels and focus for ELL students after the conversion.

The beginners are in a largely sheltered program with the exception of Algebra, so most of them get a sheltered algebra, but some are in regular algebra. But at an Intermediate I level our focus has been to mainstream students into literacy classes and social studies classes at the ninth grade level as soon as possible. And

students are also in basically, one ELL support class and then those two content classes-language arts is a block class and then they are also in other mainstream classes. So, they really only have that one ELL support and the same thing is true at the advanced level. They only get that one support. So it's really our goal to mainstream as soon as possible. We provide inclusion focused with support (Ms. Rowley, May 31, 2007).

After the beginning level, inclusion with support has become one of the main ways ELL teachers have tried to support inclusion philosophy at McKinley. Ms. Rowley comments that for her students, it has been an improvement over the program offered prior to conversion.

I feel like it [inclusion with support] has been very successful. It does vary on a case-to-case basis and so that's sort of the next step for me in looking at student assignments for next year. The majority of students have been very successful and have thrived in the inclusion model, but there were also students who really were not successful. I'm going to really look at them on a case-by-case basis and look at more flexible inclusion options for some students in the future. I'm going to think in terms of class performance and maybe we will be able to do some kind of semi-inclusion at the Intermediate I level. Or perhaps I would like to see like a double support model, like a double period. I mean that would be an option, but I feel like more content is more beneficial. Overall I feel like it has been much more successful than the old model of sheltered ELL throughout the day at the higher levels. It increases their content skills and increase progress in

their language abilities. Students' mainstream grades, for the most part, are A's, B's and some C's in the content classes. And their language abilities, their writing in particular, has really skyrocketed this year (Ms. Rowley, May 31, 2007).

While Ms. Rowley acknowledges that the system is imperfect, she feels generally positive that earlier inclusion is serving her students better. Ms. Rowley is able to collaborate in planning for the mainstream courses the ELL students take, which helps her provide appropriate support.

Mr. Sandoval has had a somewhat different experience with supported inclusion classes for ELL students because he has had difficulty planning with the mainstream teachers.

First of all, I'm going to talk about the LA 9 support. I guess I can talk about how I cannot plan with any supporting teachers. Most of the time it's been like, quickly when I see them in the hallway they say, "This is what we're doing, here are some handouts." Or the morning, or at best, maybe a week before. I really struggled with the whole support model because lots of times I felt like homework help. I mean, the pace of the mainstream classes goes so fast and I so wanted to take one handout that they taught. And you know how teachers throw out handouts. And most handouts are really difficult for ELL students to understand and I so much wanted to take one handout and spend two weeks on it. But then, since they knew it was the support model, students were asking for help with the new material. I felt like it was a mile wide but an inch deep. Like I

couldn't really teach them. I felt like I was helping them. They seemed really grateful for the help, but I felt really ineffective as a teacher and I felt not as a professional. I felt like a tutor. Also, there were many, many gaps. There were many gaps in vocabulary, grammar, spelling (Mr. Sandoval, June 27, 2007).

The difference between the success of supported inclusion for Ms. Rowley and Mr. Sandoval has to do with their instructional expectations. Ms. Rowley seems to understand the function of support classes to be that students learn and earn credit in a content course. Mr. Sandoval sees the ways in which he is unable to teach necessary language and academic content because he needs to help students keep up with the mainstream content.

At McKinley High School, the ELL programs have been affected by small school conversion in terms of reduced language learning levels available to students before they enter the mainstream. In order to address mainstreaming, which was made necessary by a reduction in FTE and available classes, ELL teachers have created relatively innovative ELL programs that offer ELL support for mainstream classes. At McKinley, ELL programs have attempted to meet and work in tandem with the mainstream program.

*What Impact Did the Implementation of Inclusion Philosophy Have on Inclusive and Equitable Instruction for ELL Students at McKinley?*

Inclusive education through the three small school ELL program at McKinley has increased academic equity to a relatively small extent in relation to social equity, which has increased more. Although ELL teachers at McKinley have tried to be

innovative in providing inclusion programs to support equitable education for ELL students, the greatest gains for ELL students have been social rather than academic. Ms. Rowley explains that mainstream inclusion has helped her students increase their self-esteem toward learning.

I think most successful has been helping students feel successful and empowered in their literacy classes. And feel supported and that they can learn in mainstream classes and make great progress and not feel like only in ELL can they understand what's going on. So, seeing that confidence build has been good (Ms. Rowley, May 31, 2007).

Ms. Chung, a mainstream language arts teacher, sees social inclusion and academic inclusion as a combination of factors that contribute to ELL student's success in mainstream classes.

Definitely, skill wise, there's consistency. I think now there's so much consistency between all the students here. Everyone here knows that we talk about books and that's just what we do. And every student knows that we read and we write down our ideas on sticky notes and on charts. So structures are really helpful. I think, the other thing too, is there's less of a stigma. I mean, I honestly don't know a lot of the kids-I probably should know-but I wouldn't have known that Mohamed Diallo is in ELL. And there are some kids like Abdi, who isn't in my class, but I see him in another class, and in talking with him and seeing his writing I would have never thought that he was in ELL classes. And it's not just his ability-it's also the stigma that used to be so attached to being

ELL. Now there are kids who are in some ELL support classes and some mainstream classes. And there are some students who are three years in America, but not in any ELL classes. And so mainstream students don't necessarily know, or care as much. It just seems to be—I would have said a few years ago that if I had a few ELL students in a mainstream classroom, they would all work together and all the mainstream kids would work apart. I don't see that happening here anymore. Mainstream students work with ELL students pretty indiscriminately. Language doesn't seem to be a barrier. Kids find ways to communicate with each other (Ms. Chung, June 20, 2007).

Ms. Delamarter, who is no longer a principal at the school, but still works in the district, also pointed out that inclusion has definitely been successful on a social realm, but has not brought about the academic success hoped for.

I don't see anything in test scores that has indicated that it [inclusion] was the right thing to do. But I also don't see anything at the comprehensive high school that indicates that they're doing any better. What's not going well, from a district point of view, is that we have yet to grapple with the fact that we have ELL students in our district. And that's a real issue for everybody. So I love being on the McKinley campus and seeing how welcome everybody is and how socially included they are. Another district administrator even commented at the board meeting that she wishes that every campus were like the McKinley High School, that when ELL parents come and ELL kids come, they're fully part of the school, they're welcome. People are thoughtful about them. I think it has been a catalyst

to get more people talking about the needs of ELL students—not just ELL teachers. But I really, I can't speak to, I see more on the school culture level and the relationship level. So I'm excited, you know, one of my issues with principals this year is we have to deal with the fact that ELL kids are not going to graduate high school. So, that's part of what I'm saying. I'm glad their needs are being talked about, but I'm not seeing anything that makes me say "Wow! This was the answer for ELL kids" (Ms. Delmarter, August 10, 2007).

Ms. Green echoes Ms. Delamarter's observation that inclusion has been beneficial for self-esteem and sociability at McKinley. She also laments that they have yet to see major academic gains.

I do think that there's a sense of belonging and a sense of identity for our ELL kids. It seems to be important to them. It's interesting to me when I think about who chose to be in leadership class last year and there were several ELL kids who were. And so, I think that is huge. It's just a lot of other issues where we haven't made a difference. But we're not purely academic beings. I think our staff has really made a commitment to teach ELL kids. That doesn't mean they always know what to do. They're—we don't even tell students they're in inclusion anymore. These are our kids and these are our classes and we have to learn how to teach all of them. So, I think that's really positive (Ms. Johnson, June 22, 2007).

Of the three conversion schools participating in this study, McKinley has done the most to make their ELL program different from the way it was before conversion.

McKinley has also done the most work toward supporting academic inclusion.

Nevertheless, the most noticeable gains have been social rather than academic.

Inclusion has thus far proved to be an imperfect method for creating fully equitable education at McKinley. Although inclusion has improved the social atmosphere for ELL students, academic success outside of the social realm has not improved dramatically. Test scores and ELL exit rates have not increased at McKinley, however, social inclusion is a step toward equitable education. Social inclusion increases the chances that teachers will see ELL students as “normal” students who can be taught by “regular” teachers. Also, as Ms. Rowley and Ms. Chung mentioned, social inclusion helps the students themselves develop academic identities connected to learning in English.

#### *Observational Data from McKinley High School*

Visitors to McKinley High School are sometimes confused because there is no central office. When the small schools demanded autonomy, they also demanded separate, school dedicated office staff and administrators. Consequently, visitors have to find the office of the school they are visiting. It is easy to distinguish the space of the three small schools at McKinley because the school was already divided into collections of buildings. When the school converted, each school received equal amounts of space within buildings that are physically separate from the other schools’ buildings.

Three years after conversion, the physical separation is no longer the biggest indicator of the schools’ identities. One of the schools has painted their name in graffiti in the main hallway of the school. Another school has sleek, participatory bulletin boards



and Ikea-like sitting areas in the halls. The third school has a large, informal meeting area for students and staff just behind their main office. Walking around campus, it is clear that these are three different schools.

Although physical environments at McKinley Educational Complex are unique, instructional environments are actually quite common. In the years before conversion, the faculty and administration were focused on improving instruction. They felt that the small school structure would serve to create environments small enough for teachers and students to work on issues of instruction. At McKinley, the small school structure was meant to serve the larger purpose of improving instruction rather than as an end to itself.

Many examples of instructional innovation were evident at McKinley. First, nearly every classroom followed a similar structure where students begin class in a meeting area with full group instruction. Students then have some time to work independently or with peers on solving problems posed during the time in the meeting area. Some classes then have a time to share about learning at the end of the class.

ELL students in a mainstream 9<sup>th</sup> grade language arts class were working to write literary analyses of books they had read. They followed the instruction the teacher modeled during the meeting area, but they also received pre-teaching on the essay in an ELL class they had attended earlier in the day. I also observed a social studies class that operated the same way. A group of ELL students attended an ELL class that supported their learning in a mainstream social studies class later in the day. An algebra class I observed was beginning to write an essay and the teacher referenced the writing process

students used in their language arts and ELL classes as a support to help them understand the task.

At McKinley, the shared instructional practices have gone a great distance toward clarifying expectations for ELL students. I realized the part common practice plays in helping ELL students understand their role in classes during an observation of an algebra class. In that class the teacher did not use the common structures as clearly or as rigidly as other teachers. During what would traditionally be the independent work time, the teacher began addressing the entire class and completed about fifteen minutes of instruction on the chalkboard. In most classrooms, if the teacher addressed the entire group, she asked the students to return to the meeting area, but this teacher just began talking to the class while they were in their independent work time seats. An ELL student I had observed in other classes to be very attentive and interested kept her head lowered to work, talked to her friend and turned her back on the teacher while he was instructing at the chalkboard. It appeared to me that she did not understand that he was addressing the whole class.

Seeing this well-liked, good student disregard the teacher's instruction showed how much she, as an ELL student, relied on moving around the room to mark learning and behavior expectations. When the class did not move, she did not recognize that it was time for group instruction. Although this was only one instance, it demonstrated the importance of common instructional practice in helping ELL students understand classroom expectations. At McKinley Educational Complex, even the beginner ELL

classrooms followed the common practice of observing the meeting area, independent work time and closing reflection or share.

In observations, I saw several examples of the ways in which common instructional practice supports inclusion of ELL students at McKinley. ELL teachers work with mainstream teachers to the extent that staffing allows and ELL students find familiar expectations when they go to mainstream classes.

## **Conclusion**

The ELL programs investigated in this research have all tried to support inclusion. At Jefferson, students go to mainstream elective courses and participate in mainstream extracurricular activities. At McKinley High School, the small schools have tried ELL/mainstream coteaching, ELL classes that directly support mainstream content classes and alignment of classroom language and structures to help ELL students move from ELL to mainstream. Cedar View has implemented a model where the ELL teachers directly support mainstream content classes within ELL classes. Although all of these structures attempt to support the philosophy of inclusion, they are limited in their ability to do so because they provide for a small number of ELL students within each program. They are not “inclusion” programs. They are small, unsustained pockets where inclusion happens for a select group of students for a limited amount of time. ELL programs are constrained from supporting inclusion by practical matters such as the size of the programs, rate of language acquisition of secondary students and by laws that govern the rights of language learners. All of the ELL programs participating in this study focused most of their staffing on newcomer and beginner classes. When inclusion was attempted,

it was at the intermediate and advanced levels. At none of the programs was there time left over for ELL teachers to work in supporting ELL students in mainstream classes. There simply were not teachers or time.

Overall, small school conversions have not greatly affected ELL programs. All three of the small schools participating in the study have maintained separate ELL classes, at least at the newcomer and beginner levels. All of the programs also provide some kind of class for intermediate and advanced level students. As before conversions, every student who qualifies for ELL is served by an ELL class. More than undergoing dramatic programmatic changes, the ELL programs at each school have felt different pressures after the school converted to small schools.

At McKinley High School, the ELL programs became much more affiliated with their small school than with the campus because of the small school model practiced at that campus. Unlike the other two campuses, McKinley's schools are autonomous and have three autonomous ELL programs. The ELL programs at each school have incorporated the character and vision of the small school rather than the strictly following a vision for ELL. At Jefferson, the ELL program did not change its role after the conversion. There, the ELL teachers asked to stay the way they were and administrators agreed. At Cedar View, the ELL program has gone through several incarnations. The year I studied there, teachers interacted less with the rest of the school than ever before. It was in no way in a position to support students with the way it was cut off from the rest of the school.

Conversion small schools have resulted in more equitable experiences for ELL students in terms of personalized education and socialization. The small school programs at all three schools have had some measure of success in creating programs where students identify and are cared for, which increases their ability to function as students at the school. Equitable outcomes for instruction and learning, however, are only more equitable when ELL teachers can be directly involved in planning or teaching the mainstream class ELL students are in. If ELL teachers are not involved, students are mainstreamed without support. Successful inclusion where ELL students receive instruction in content as well as language acquisition requires input by ELL teachers.

## CHAPTER VII

### DISCUSSION

The previous three chapters provided analysis of each individual school case and showed that every conversion turned out quite differently, even though they were all supported by the Coalition of Essential Schools. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a cross-case analysis of the three small school cases. The chapter focuses on the relationship of ELL programs to planning for special education programs as a central tension emerging at all three conversion schools. The chapter discusses several differences between ELL and special education including different legislative histories resulting in different program structures and staffing formulas.

#### *Philosophical Tension Between ELL Programs and Inclusion*

Investigating the ELL programs in the three conversion high schools through the lens of the research questions illuminates the ways in which ELL programs were planned and implemented during conversion. The three research questions also lead to the larger purpose of this investigation, which is an examination of the philosophical tension surrounding ELL programs in conversion small schools. The interviews and observations gathered for this investigation have produced data that shows where philosophical tension emerges.

#### **The Tension of Special Education Legislation and ELL Inclusion**

One of the tensions at all three schools was the ELL program's relationship to special education. At all of the schools the staff struggled with how to structure of the

ELL program because there is little guidance in research or small school literature. For guidance, administrators and staff looked to the special education programs on structuring inclusive ELL programs in small schools. Consequently, at every school, the ELL program was at least partly modeled on special education programs.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1975 established the desirability of educating special education students in the least restrictive environment. Frequently, the least restrictive environment is the mainstream classroom (Salend, 1998). For many special education students, this legislation has meant that they are served mostly in regular classrooms while receiving perhaps one period a day of special education support. In small schools, the environment of least restriction has become linked to a philosophy and practice of mainstream inclusion.

Special education policy and small school inclusion fit together well in ideology and practice because both focus on inclusion as an equitable and democratic ideal. Perhaps because of the strong legislation surrounding special education practice, it has become a model for ELL programs in small schools. An administrator at Cedar View describes the way in which he understands ELL education to be linked to special education:

Philosophically, the move to ELL in an inclusionary model is real similar to the move for special education. That there's that core learning for the kids in the content areas needs to happen from people who are content experts. That the students benefit from interacting with their sort of non-categorical program peers,

that “mainstream” students benefit from working with the students who are coming out of a sort of separatist program (Mr. Gray, July 13, 2006).

Both the administrator and the teacher in two different small schools understand special education laws and programs to be a model for ELL. At Jefferson, Ken Bomer also perceives the decision of special education staff to place students in self-contained classrooms for half the day to be more readily accepted than if an ELL teacher had proposed the same plan for ELL students. Although Jefferson is a specific context, Mr. Bomer’s comment helps show the strength of the links between inclusion for special education students, mainstream students and, ultimately, ELL students in conversion small schools.

It was a special education person who said, “It would work for us if we could keep our kids ‘til 11:00 and then after that doesn’t matter.” And somehow, that worked because it came from special education. Special education [students] are a little bit more integrated overall, but they wanted to keep their kids for a certain amount of time and I said, “well that works for ELL.” Somehow everyone just said, “okay.” And it was kind of miracle to me because I feel like if we had said something like that, it wouldn’t have worked so well (Mr. Bomer, October 3, 2006).

Ms. Scarcella’s comment shows the strength that special education has over planning for special populations at her school. Having the support of the special education department gave the ELL department strength to plan the program as they saw best.



Naomi Delamarter, the conversion principal at McKinley High School recounted her personal struggle with inclusion for special education and ELL students:

I deeply believed in inclusion, but I always asked this question, “Are the kids serving a political philosophy of inclusion, or is inclusion serving kids?” And I wasn't always sure that taking an ELL student or some special ed. Kids out of a specialized instructional environment was what was best, but I think we felt a pretty deep philosophy that as much inclusion as was appropriate should be done. And I think we always struggled with what the heck does that mean for a kid who doesn't speak English. And in my heart, at least, I always wanted them included. But then, when you see them included in classes where the teacher doesn't know how to teach them, and they're being left out (Ms. Delamarter, August 10, 2007).

Although administrators at McKinley struggled with the practice of inclusion, they believed in inclusion philosophically. Because of that belief, when the ELL staff at the school proposed a newcomer center for beginning levels of ELL, the proposal was rejected because it was not sufficiently inclusive and did not allow for the schools to have autonomous programs. Ms. Delamarter cited inclusion successes she had seen at other small schools and in a pilot program at McKinley as the reason to push ELL into a special education type of inclusion program:

I remember the ELL proposal about a newcomer center on the campus. So I think the path we started going down as a big school was more special education. At first, it was around much more inclusion, you know because we visited another

local conversion school a bunch of times and they did a ton of inclusion. We really saw that for the resource room kids that inclusion was going to make a big difference for them. And when we included special education kids in the ninth grade house it made a big difference for their behavior and sense of belonging. We didn't see as much change in their grades as we would like to, but it was very helpful. I'm thinking about a kid like Michael, who is on an autism spectrum for sure and in many places would have been fully excluded. And we saw him grow over four years and graduate (Ms. Delamarter, August 10, 2007).

Strikingly, all of the preceding comments by administrators and teachers about ELL and special education show that ELL programs in these conversion small schools were not created with the learning needs of ELL students in mind as much as they were with the needs of special education students in mind. The ELL programs have attempted to serve an inclusion agenda that is based on special education programming. This mismatch of programming has created pressure for the ELL programs to be like special education programs even though it is legally impossible for them to do so.

### **The Tension of Transitioning from ELL to Mainstream Classes**

Small school conversion has also affected ELL programs in terms of when students need to transition to mainstream classes and in terms of the ELL course offerings. At Cedar View, the conversion did not change the ELL program significantly because it was a very small program that stayed within one small school academy. At Jefferson, administrators decided to remove some of the levels of ELL for a year or two

because they believed that after the intermediate level students could understand mainstream classes well enough.

Administrators at McKinley insisted upon full autonomy for each of the small schools. In order to serve the needs of autonomous programs, two ELL teachers were assigned to each small school. Having only two ELL teachers in each small school reduced the number of levels that could be taught. Whereas the ELL program had previously offered Beginning I, Beginning II, Intermediate I and II and Advanced level classes, in the small schools, there was only enough staffing to offer Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced. This increased the range of abilities of students in every ELL class. Additionally, ELL classes grew in size due to the decreased staffing.

For both Cedar View and Jefferson, electives stayed in place and both schools allowed crossovers so ELL students had elective choices to take for their “mainstream” time. Autonomous small schools made the situation for ELL students at McKinley very different than it was at Jefferson and Cedar View. Many elective classes were gotten rid of at McKinley in favor of spending money on core academic teachers positions. Paring down elective courses also gave the schools the ability to become truly autonomous. If they had maintained electives, the electives would have had to serve all three schools, which would have decreased autonomy dramatically. Previous to the conversion, McKinley had used elective courses as places for ELL students to participate in the mainstream program while they were still at the beginning and intermediate levels. The absence of elective courses has meant that ELL students must take mainstream content area courses much sooner than they had to in the comprehensive school era.

The fact that students at McKinley have to enter mainstream classes up to a year earlier than they had to before the conversion motivated the teachers at each of the small schools to align the structures and language of their classes with the structures and language of mainstream classes. In doing so, they provide students with a way to know what to expect in the mainstream classes. Teachers hope that matching the structures will help students understand the class, if not the content.

For two of the schools, small school conversion affected the relationship of the ELL program to the rest of the school. When the school's structures changed, the ELL programs also change. The integration of the ELL program as a part of the school changed significantly at Cedar View and McKinley. At Jefferson, the relationship of the ELL program to the rest of the school stayed quite similar to the way it was before the conversion.

At Cedar View, the ELL program has been both more and less integrated into the small schools than it was before the conversion. For the first six years of the conversion the ELL program was housed within only one of the academies at the school. During that time, the ELL program was an integral part of that academy and ELL teachers had the ability to collaborate closely with other academy teachers. They also shared students in common.

For the 2006-2007 school year, ELL students were placed in all four of the school's academies but the teachers stayed within one academy. This caused the working relationships between the ELL teachers and the mainstream teachers to decrease significantly. The move to put ELL students outside of what had previously been the

ELL academy distanced the ELL program from the rest of the school by making it unmanageable for ELL teachers to work with mainstream teachers.

The integration of the ELL programs at McKinley was very different than at the other schools because of the autonomy of the schools. Each school had an ELL program dedicated to the school so that neither students nor teachers would work within another school. This autonomy resulted in each ELL program taking on the character of its school. For example, one program decided to support the literacy classes at their school while another focused on content area classes. Each program has been tailored according to the needs of the individual school. Also, both the ELL teachers and the ELL students are more integrated into the life of the school than they were before conversion.

### **The Tension of Deficient Staffing for ELL Programs**

Finally, all of the small school ELL programs have been affected by a lack of staffing in light of the job they are asked to do. The chart below shows the teacher to student ratios in relation to the school's total population.

**TABLE 3****Staffing Data for Jefferson, Cedar View and McKinley High Schools**

School	Number of ELL Teachers	Total ELL Population	Student to Teacher Ratio
Jefferson	2.5	200	80:1
Cedar View	2.0	60	30:1
McKinley (All three small schools combined)	6.0	200	33:1

Small schools have exacerbated the issue of low staffing for ELL programs because within small schools ELL programs are asked to stretch further and do more. At all three programs, teachers lamented the fact that because of small schools ELL students spend less time in ELL classes, but ELL teachers are expected to manage their success outside of ELL as they are mainstreamed earlier than ever before. Most teachers find these expectations difficult to live up to.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

As the last chapter of this dissertation, this chapter details the reasons that inclusion has become a popular ideology and practice for special populations in public schools. Additionally, this chapter discusses several reasons that ELL programs cannot be modeled on special education programs. The chapter also includes a discussion about the paradox of inclusion for ELL populations. Finally, the chapter ends with recommendations for future research.

#### *Why ELL Programs Cannot be Modeled on Special Education Programs*

The impetus toward inclusion of special populations within the small school movement derives from a combination of two sources. Within the small schools movement inclusion is desirable because it is a remedy to the historical system of tracking in large, comprehensive high schools. Small schools advocates understand tracking and labeling students to be one of the most detrimental systems of the large high school. Secondly, in terms of special education, as much inclusion as possible was mandated by the IDEA in 1997 (Salend, 1998). The ideologies related to de-tracking students and the legislation requiring special education students to participate in the least restrictive environment both contribute to the overall philosophy of inclusion in small schools.

In addition to the end of historical tracking the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1975 established the desirability of educating special education

students in the least restrictive environment. In many cases the least restrictive environment is the mainstream classroom (Salend, 1998). For many special education students, this legislation has meant that they are served mostly in regular classrooms while receiving perhaps one period a day of special education support. In small schools, the environment of least restriction has been applied to all populations and grown into a philosophy of inclusion.

Although the environment of least restriction and, consequently, inclusion, is mandated only for special education students, ELL students have been incorporated into the group special populations. In many small schools inclusion philosophy is at work in ELL programs and has decreased the amount of ELL classes offered in favor of having ELL students in mainstream classrooms.

While inclusion is a strongly held ideological principle of small school philosophy, there is also a financial incentive for small schools to include special populations in mainstream classrooms. One of the ways that small schools manage to reduce their size affordably is by operating with fewer staff members who do more jobs. In the small school environment, operating an ELL program where ELL teachers teach only ELL students in relatively small classes is often financially untenable. Placing ELL students in mainstream classrooms for all or some of their day, enables schools to assign ELL teachers to other classes or reduce the number of ELL teachers they employ.

While the ELL programs at these conversion small schools have become aligned with special education programs, ELL programs do not have equal funding or legal mandates as special education programs. In comparison to special education programs,



ELL programs are allotted many fewer teachers per student. ELL does not have the conditions of the Environment of Least Restriction like special education. Therefore the staffing and conditions for staffing in each program are stricter than they are for ELL. While special education teachers often have flexibility on ways to use their time, ELL teachers do not. Special education teachers can often create innovative ways to support students that are not dependent on teaching in separate classrooms. Special education teachers have the ability to teach special education students in mainstream classrooms. ELL teachers do not have this kind of flexibility. Many districts require that ELL seat time be accounted for. Therefore, in the cases of all the schools in this study “inclusion” of ELL students cannot be fully supported because ELL teachers do not have the contractual freedom to do so.

In their study on inclusion of ELL students in Florida, Platt, Harper and Mendoza (2003) note, “The deprivation of specialized ESL services to students with the greatest need for language and literacy support runs counter to the guidelines provided by the OCR, even though full inclusion is promoted at policy levels as the means to achieve equity” (p. 127). In small schools, equity through inclusion rests on the idea that inclusion equals equity.

Conflating special education law with laws defining ELL services creates ELL programs that do not most effectively serve the needs of ELL students. The 1974 legislation addressing ELL students, *Lau vs. Nichols*, states, “Integration, or being allowed to sit in regular classrooms does NOT ensure even basic language education. Students must receive language education in order to participate fully in school

programs” (Berube, 2000). *Lau vs. Nichols* mandated that ELL students be served in what is essentially the opposite of an environment of least restriction. Under *Lau vs. Nichols*, nonnative English speakers were guaranteed the right to specialized English language classes. Although the environment of least restriction and, consequently, inclusion, is mandated only for special education students, ELL students have been intellectually incorporated into a more general group defined as “special populations”.

For Jefferson and Cedar View High Schools, relying on special education philosophy and practice as a model for the creation of new ELL programs in small schools has not allowed ELL teachers to offer programs that they perceive to be sufficiently supportive to ELL students. Mr. Bomer at Jefferson described the level where students leave an ELL dominated schedule and enter a mainstream dominated schedule as the place where students are likely to drop out.

The tension between inclusion in conversion small schools and ELL programs can also be attributed to differing ideas about equitable education. Inclusion philosophy at small schools seeks to achieve educational equity through the process of educating all students in similar environments. On the other hand, for ELL professionals, achieving equitable education focuses less on the process of education and more on its outcomes. At the small schools who participated in my study, modeling ELL programs on special education programs has caused unrealistic, unmanageable expectations about the inclusion of ELL students.

*The Paradox of Separation: Appropriate Services and Marginalization*

An even more fundamental issue producing tension in ELL programs in conversion schools is the inherent marginalization of ELL students and the programs that support them (Grey, 1991). Separation of ELL students is created by federal legislation mandating separate English education for students who do not speak English as their native language. Separation itself does not guarantee marginalization, but studies show that ELL students graduate at much lower rates than mainstream students (Norrid-Lacey and Spencer, 2000; Watt and Roessingh, 1994) and that they are more likely to be tracked into low academic classes than mainstream students (Callahan, 2005). While legislation is meant to protect the interests of ELL students, in reality, they are marginalized and failing.

Inclusion as the Coalition of Essential Schools envisions it is meant to de-marginalize the marginalized populations within comprehensive high schools. Inclusion at conversion small schools seeks to disrupt tracking and consequently increase educational opportunity by offering all students high- level academic classes.

CES's philosophy and practice of inclusion creates a tension in conversion small schools because it asserts a philosophy and practice that are not viable for ELL students. Federal legislation does not allow the dismantling of ELL programs in favor of inclusive programs; therefore, ELL programs in conversion small schools have a difficult time finding a place in new schools that promote inclusion as a remedy for marginalization.

The schools participating in this study gave ample evidence of the tension produced when inherently separated programs are intended to address marginalization

through educational inclusion. Evidence of tension shows in the ways in which ELL programs were planned and implemented through conversions. At Jefferson, the ELL program remained similar to the way it was prior to the conversion. One of the teachers there commented, “We carry the same exact program that we started out with, but the thing that has changed is that kids are in an academy when they first come to the school and as much as possible their elective classes.” Now, the ELL program remains unassociated with any of the four academies at Jefferson. They solved their problem by remaining separated.

Unfortunately, ELL students at Jefferson also experience some of the undesirable consequences of marginalization. One teacher mentioned that they see high numbers of students dropping out at the intermediate level. “Students are really good and then they go out to regular English and once they get out of our self-contained program a lot of them just drop like flies. They can’t handle it, they’ve lost the connection.” Also, students who reach advanced levels of English are sometimes tracked into low-level academic courses. In my observations of the program, one of the classes billed as a transitional ELL math class was only one third ELL students. The other two thirds were low achievers and special education students.

The separation of the ELL program at Jefferson encourages student success while students are in ELL classes. On the other hand, this separation also works to produce the negative effects of marginalization when students begin to move outside of the ELL program.

At McKinley High School, ELL programs were established in all three of the small schools. Each school maintains its own ELL program. Also, teachers have experimented with inclusion in order to get ELL students into mainstream classes earlier than they had done prior to conversion. Of the three conversions studied, McKinley has gone the farthest toward using special education inclusion models for ELL populations.

Over time, teachers have implemented several models for supporting inclusion such as coteaching and direct support classes. Both the coteaching and support classes have helped select groups of ELL students succeed in mainstream classes. For students who have these support classes, mainstreaming earlier than usual been more manageable than it was prior to conversion. Unfortunately, offering one support or co-taught class per semester reaches a small fraction of the ELL population at each school. Many students are still mainstreaming without sufficient language support from either a mainstream or an ELL teacher.

Of the three schools, McKinley has gone farthest toward offering ELL students the type of academically supported inclusion promoted by CES. Due to insufficient staffing, however, supported inclusion can only be offered in isolated pockets and has not yet become a comprehensive, systematic solution for the education of ELL students.

At Cedar View High School, the relationship of the ELL program to the rest of the academy programs has been contentious. The program is smaller than the ELL programs at the other two schools. Therefore, it had been place entirely within one of the academies. When ELL resided within an academy, the ELL teachers worked closely with mainstream teachers to provide language support for mainstream classes. Mr.

Kennedy felt that his ability to know the work of other teachers helped him create a more inclusive experience for ELL students. In terms of the entire school of small academies, however, administrators did not believe housing ELL inside of one academy was equitable. Isolating the population into one academy meant that only one academy had to deal with test scores and instruction for all of the ELL students at the school. Mr. Clausen explained what administrators at Cedar View were seeing when they looked at the distribution of the ELL students:

We were really looking at the fact that, when all the students were concentrated in my small school, it was a third of my population. Almost a third was ELL students, which had a very significant impact upon the small school. And also there's an equity issue because there's no other population in the district that's isolated in that way. I hate to look at it from the burden perspective. . . (Mr. Clausen, December 7, 2006).

In order to make ELL more equal at the academy level, the structure of the ELL program was changed in order to place incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grade ELL students in all four academies.

Changing the program effectively placed the ELL program outside of the academies since it lost its relation to the academy where it had been. Placing ELL students in every academy was paradoxical in terms of inclusion. Although done under the guise of inclusion, it actually left ELL students less supported in mainstream classes and left ELL teachers less connected to any of the school communities. Ms. Henig, the first year ELL teacher at Cedar View, expressed her concern over ELL students in the new structure.

I would say my students are not successful at math and science. I think the more advanced students are a little bit better, but my students, [beginners and intermediates] I'd say like 90% of them are failing math and science. There's even something like a sheltered math class, but they're not succeeding. In humanities, it seems like there's more success and more support, which makes sense to me. There's more language focus. And I have a language arts ELL class. Those kids are also in mainstream English class, so they get their language arts class and then they get the support specifically about things like "what is a writing prompt," "let's look at the rubric," "do we understand the rubric?" So they get a kind of academic support specifically for humanities (Ms. Henig, May 15, 2007).

Considering inclusion in terms of separation and marginality of ELL students shows that small schools have had only pockets of success in their mission to disrupt the educational processes that marginalize ELL students. Although the conversion small schools have created programs with the intention of inclusiveness, external factors such as federal legislation and insufficient staffing have thus far made it virtually impossible for programs to create sustained, supportive systems that fully include ELL students.

### *Discussion*

The ways in which inclusion affects equitable education of ELL students in conversion small schools is the central concern of this research. The interviews and observations conducted at three conversions small school sites provided data for an analysis of inclusion. From the research, several points emerged.

First, inclusion was understood and practiced differently at each site even though all of the sites did conversion work under the auspices of the Coalition of Essential Schools. The history and context of the ELL program in relation to the comprehensive school influenced the decisions administrators made about the ELL program in the small schools.

Second, ELL students have generally benefited socially from inclusion programs. At all three schools teachers reported ELL students' ability to socialize and make mainstream friends through taking classes outside of ELL. Also, the ELL programs themselves provide personalized connections for ELL students. The loss of connections and friendships that develop in ELL may combine with mainstream classes to contribute to spikes in dropping out at the intermediate level. Since the sense of community within the ELL program seems to be important to the success of ELL students, small schools may benefit from ensuring that structures capitalize on the community formed in the ELL program rather than creating structures that isolate students from that community.

All of the ELL teachers reported at least some social success with inclusion models. At the same time, all of the teachers mentioned numerous difficulties in the relationship between academic classes and inclusion. Although it was not all bad, several teachers mentioned that students have a great deal of difficulty in classes that are unsupported by ELL teachers. Teachers also mentioned ELL students' success when a class was supported by an ELL teacher or co-taught by an ELL teacher. The data shows that at this point in time, mainstream teachers are not prepared to receive intermediate level ELL students in content area classes. ELL students who were included at the



intermediate level were only successful in mainstream classes that were directly supported in some capacity by an ELL teacher.

Third, the schools that were most able to try innovative inclusion programs were the schools that had the most autonomy from other schools. Autonomy is important for truly inclusive environments because it provides administrators and teachers with the flexibility in planning schedules and classes that meet the needs of the students in the small school. Autonomy ensures that administrators and teachers have the freedom and creativity to imagine solutions for their population without the added burden of fitting schedules and time into other schools' schedules. In the small school, autonomy is key to innovation and ELL planning for inclusion requires innovation.

Finally, this study showed the degree to which inclusion for ELL students is philosophically connected to inclusion for students in special education. Though they are governed by separate sets of laws, the idea of inclusion as a beneficial movement for special education students has been applied to be beneficial to ELL students as well. While some of the instructional techniques for special education students and ELL students may be similar, they are actually very different populations. Legally, ELL is not an extension of special education, so ELL students deserve to be independently analyzed when small schools make conversion decisions.

#### *Future Research*

The current study was limited in its geographical and temporal scopes. It addressed three schools of relative proximity to one another over a single year. Future

research should expand the results of this investigation by focusing on different research settings and long-term outcomes.

The populations of the schools included in this study were all under 30% ELL. In addition, all of the schools' ELL populations were at least somewhat mixed. The results of the study would change if the study were done using different participants. If inclusion were investigated in different contexts we could expect results to change. A different geographical context would show how schools manage the constraints of other state laws. Different school populations, such as a homogenous population comprising 75% of the total school population, would reveal different beliefs and practices centering on inclusion. In addition, an investigation of inclusion philosophy and practice in a "90/90/90" school would give a picture of inclusion's role in highly effective schools. Finally, studying more in depth the experiences students have in inclusion environments as opposed to ELL or regular mainstream environments would further show the ways in which inclusion philosophy might relate to inclusion practice.

Along with context, time could be a variable in future research. The current study lasted only one year. Longitudinal studies of the three cases could reveal more about the effectiveness of inclusion and how the beliefs about inclusion develop in a school. A longitudinal study of the three cases could focus on student outcomes and examine which outcomes relate to inclusion philosophy or practice. Teacher attitude and change could also be investigated longitudinally. Small schools are intended to be sufficiently small that they can address student need; therefore, change in beliefs should be apparent.

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## APPENDIX A

## COALITION OF ESSENTIAL SCHOOLS 10 COMMON PRINCIPLES

1. The school should focus on helping young people learn to use their minds well. Schools should not be comprehensive if such a claim is made at the expense of the school's central intellectual purpose.
2. The school's goals should be simple: that each student master a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge. While these skills and areas will, to varying degrees, reflect the traditional academic disciplines, the program's design should be shaped by the intellectual and imaginative powers and competencies that the students need, rather than by "subjects" as conventionally defined. The aphorism "less is more" should dominate: curricular decisions should be guided by the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement rather than by an effort to merely cover content.
3. The school's goals should apply to all students, while the means to these goals will vary as those students themselves vary. School practice should be tailor-made to meet the needs of every group or class of students.
4. Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum feasible extent. Efforts should be directed toward a goal that no teacher have direct responsibility for more than 80 students in the high school and middle school and no more than 20 in the elementary school. To capitalize on this personalization, decisions about the details of the course of study, the use of students' and teachers' time and the choice of teaching materials and specific pedagogies must be unreservedly placed in the hands of the principal and staff.
5. The governing practical metaphor of the school should be student-as-worker, rather than the more familiar metaphor of teacher-as-deliverer-of-instructional-services. Accordingly, a prominent pedagogy will be coaching, to provoke students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves.
6. Teaching and learning should be documented and assessed with tools based on student performance of real tasks. Students not yet at appropriate levels of competence should be provided intensive support and resources to assist them quickly to meet those standards. Multiple forms of evidence, ranging from ongoing observation of the learner to completion of specific projects, should be used to better understand the learner's strengths and needs, and to plan for further assistance. Students should have opportunities to exhibit their expertise before family and community. The diploma should be awarded upon a successful final demonstration of mastery for graduation - an "Exhibition." As the diploma is awarded when earned, the school's program proceeds with no strict age grading and with no system of credits earned" by "time spent" in class. The emphasis is on the students' demonstration that they can do important things.
7. The tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of

unanxious expectation ("I won't threaten you but I expect much of you"), of trust (until abused) and of decency (the values of fairness, generosity and tolerance). Incentives appropriate to the school's particular students and teachers should be emphasized. Parents should be key collaborators and vital members of the school community.

8. The principal and teachers should perceive themselves as generalists first (teachers and scholars in general education) and specialists second (experts in but one particular discipline). Staff should expect multiple obligations (teacher-counselor-manager) and a sense of commitment to the entire school.

9. Ultimate administrative and budget targets should include, in addition to total student loads per teacher of 80 or fewer pupils on the high school and middle school levels and 20 or fewer on the elementary level, substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff, and an ultimate per pupil cost not to exceed that at traditional schools by more than 10 percent. To accomplish this, administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided students in many traditional schools.

10. The school should demonstrate non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It should model democratic practices that involve all who are directly affected by the school. The school should honor diversity and build on the strength of its communities, deliberately and explicitly challenging all forms of inequity.



## APPENDIX B

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Please tell me about your school's journey toward becoming small. What issues motivated the conversion?
2. Where did you expect to see the greatest amount of change after the conversion?
3. What role did a philosophy of inclusion play in the conversion?
4. What issues were taken into consideration when planning the ELL program during the conversion?
5. What was the process for deciding how to structure the ELL program?
6. What has been challenging about operating ELL programs in the new schools?
7. What has been successful in terms of ELL in the new schools?
8. If you could plan the ELL program over again, what would you do differently and why would it be better?
9. In what ways has inclusion of ELL students been successful?
10. In what ways has inclusion of ELL students been difficult?

APPENDIX C

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION GUIDE

1. Physical environment of classroom:
  - a. Are students sitting in rows?
  - b. Is the teacher the main focus of the classroom?
  - c. Does the teacher dominate the talk of the classroom?
  - d. Is there student work up?
  - e. Do students seem to have some amount of ownership over the room?
2. In what ways is the instruction and curriculum differentiated for diverse needs? For example, are instructions presented in writing as well as orally? Are there opportunities for peer-peer talk? Are there opportunities for students to access the teacher privately? Does the structure of the class seem sufficiently obvious that most students can follow it? Is there student choice about topic and reading level?
3. Do any students seem isolated from the other students?
4. In what ways does the teacher interact with ELL students? What kinds of questions does the teacher ask ELL students? What kind of work are they doing?

## APPENDIX D

### AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Date</b>	<b>Research Activity</b>	<b>School</b>
July 13, 2006	Interview with Charles Gray	Cedar View High School
June 22, 2006	Interview with Amy Scarcella	Jefferson High School
July 18, 2006	Interview with Margaret Hawkins	Cedar View High School
October 3, 2006	Interview with Ken Bomer	Jefferson High School
October 17, 2006	Day long observation of ELL student's schedule	Jefferson High School
December 7, 2006	Interview with Celia Carr	Cedar View High School
December 7, 2006	Interview with Rob Clausen	Cedar View High School
February 9, 2007	Day long observation of ELL student's schedule	McKinley High School
February 21, 2007	Day long observation of ELL student's schedule	Jefferson High School
April 25, 2007	Day long observation of ELL student's schedule	McKinley High School
May 10, 2007	Day long observation of ELL student's schedule	Cedar View High School
May 15, 2007	Interview with Indira Henig	Cedar View High School
May 15, 2007	Day long observation of ELL student's schedule	Cedar View High School
May 31, 2007	Interview with Vanessa Rowley	McKinley High School
June 7, 2007	Day long observation of ELL student's schedule	Cedar View High School
June 7, 2007	Interview with Sean Kennedy	Cedar View High School
June 8, 2007	Day long observation of ELL student's schedule	Jefferson High School
June 12, 2007	Day long observation of ELL student's schedule	McKinley High School
June 20, 2007	Interview with Annabel Chung	McKinley High School
June 22, 2007	Interview with Sylvia Johnson	McKinley High School
June 22, 2007	Interview with Mark Skoda	McKinley High School
June 27, 2007	Interview with Ella Green	Jefferson High School
June 27, 2007	Interview with Rafael Sandoval	McKinley High School
July 5, 2007	Interview with Lydia Stewart	McKinley High School
August 10, 2007	Interview with Naomi Delamarter	McKinley High School

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